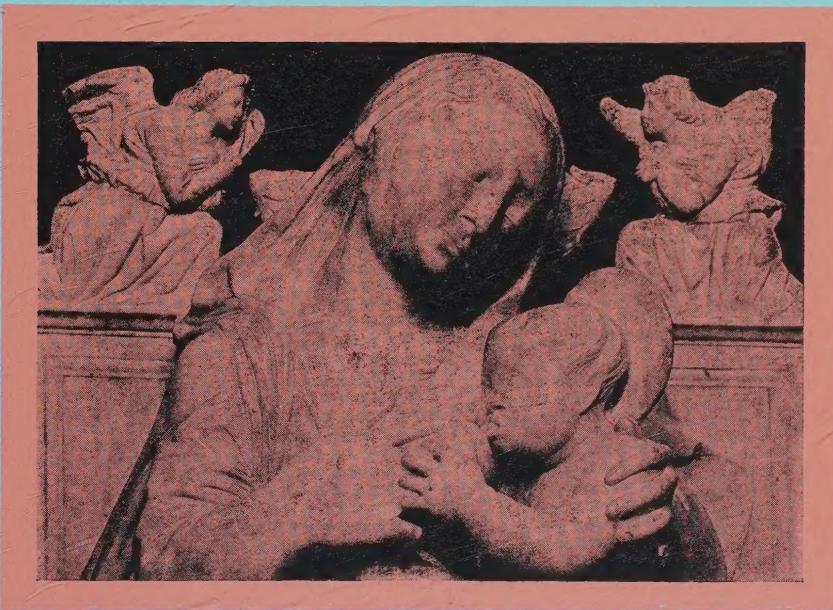


# GAZETTE DES BEAUX-ARTS

SEPTEMBER 1943



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# THE KUO CH'IN WANG TEXTILES

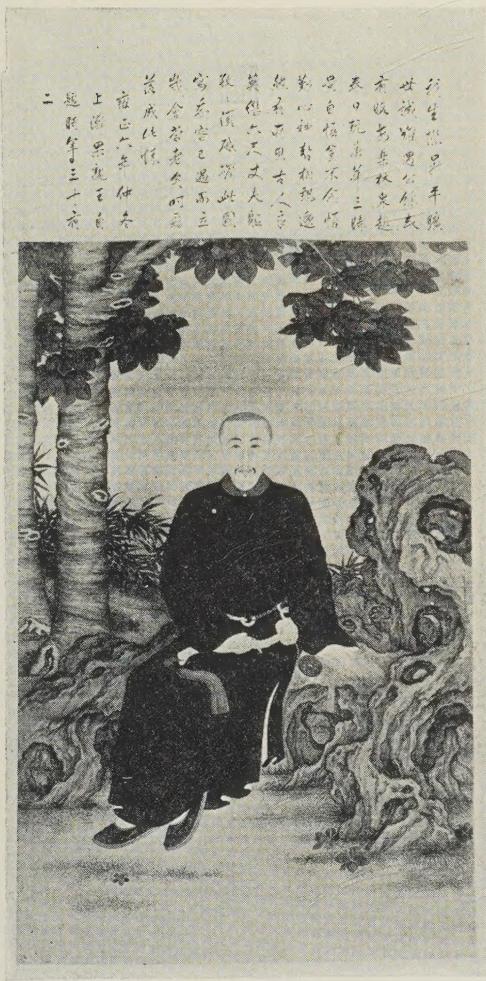


FIG. 1.—PORTRAIT OF PRINCE KUO CH'IN WANG, 1728.—  
W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum,  
Kansas City, Mo.

through North China, and the panic-stricken peasantry, watching the coming of the aliens, became looters of their own soil. Sacred buildings, standing in dignified

**T**HE Chinese robes described in this article are part of a remarkable find of materials coming from the tomb of Kuo Ch'in Wang, the seventeenth son of the Emperor K'ang Hsi. This imperial prince, born in 1697 (reproduced here — fig. 1 — is his portrait painted in December 1728 when he was thirty-two years of age<sup>1</sup>), lived through the short reign of his brother Yung Chêng and into the third year of that of his nephew Ch'ien Lung. Kuo Ch'in Wang died in 1738<sup>2</sup> at the age of forty-two.

Prince Kuo was a noted artist, a calligrapher and a collector. He painted a portrait of Confucius which was later engraved on stone and set up in the Pei Lin of Hsianfu, Shensi, where numerous rubbings have been made of it. There are also in the Pei Lin several stela engraved with his handwriting. Living prosperously<sup>2</sup>, he stood high in the estimation of his ruling relatives during life, and the elaborate textiles recovered from his tomb suggest the magnificence of his burial rites.

This material has come to light today because of the nightmarish existence which has been China's since the late twenties and early thirties of our century. It was then that the enemy began filtering in from Manchuria

1. Portrait inscription translated by Mr. S. H. Han, Department of Far Eastern Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

2. Mr. George N. Kates very kindly looked up texts not available in Kansas City and forwarded information from DR. ARTHUR W. HUMMEL's book, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, Washington, 1943, Vol. I, p. 331.



FIG. 2.—THE HUNDRED CRANES (or Wave and Pine Tree), embroidered fancy compound satin, 54½" long.—W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

asked many questions about their source and was informed that they had come from the Imperial Manchu Tombs, precisely from the tomb of Prince Kuo Ch'in Wang, and that for several years they had been hidden away in the homes of peasants. Jades and porcelains from this tomb had been on the Peking market in earlier years, but these objects were not so easily identified as Imperial property. With the textiles an effort had been made to disguise the place of their princely origin. Many of the robes were cut up into mats and runners. From some the collars and cuffs were missing; of others only the collars and cuffs remained. Nearly all of the linings had been removed and several of the garments had been taken apart. Mr. Sickman rescued one robe, the *Lantern* robe (figs. 9-11), just as a fill-in design was being added to make a throw for some Westerner's Steinway.

Mr. Sickman was particularly eager to obtain examples of all the different patterns and weaves buried in the Kuo Ch'in Wang tomb, for they, unlike other Ch'ing textiles, could be assigned to a definite period. Prince Kuo having died in 1738, the latest date the materials could represent would be the reign of the Emperor

isolation through the reigns of successive emperors, were entered and robbed of their treasures by men who felt that they of the country had a greater right to share in this past grandeur than did those who came from across the sea. Thus it was that the Imperial Manchu tombs were pillaged of their hidden wealth and glory.

The importance of the Kuo Ch'in Wang Textiles was first discovered by Mr. Laurence Sickman, curator of Oriental Art, William Rockhill Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City (at the present time Captain, Army Air Corps) in Peking in 1934. Scouts or agents on one of their many calls brought him a group of tomb textiles which he recognized as of an early date and of an uniformly high quality. He

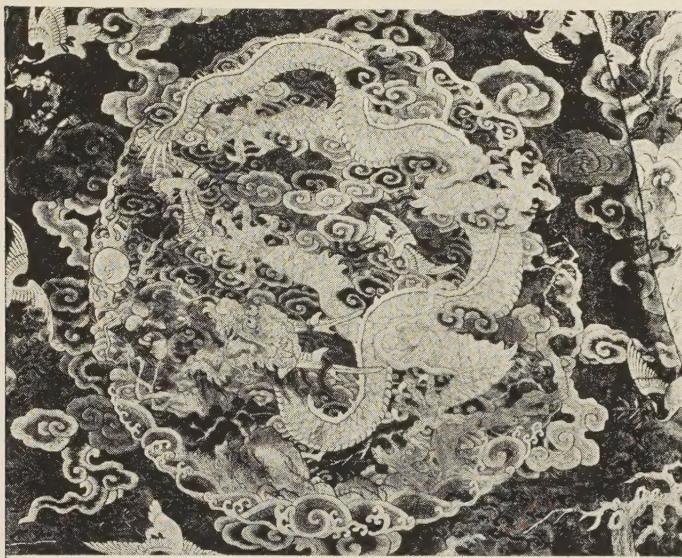


FIG. 3.—THE HUNDRED CRANES (detail of right front medallion).—W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

ments seemed to be of the early XVIII century. But Mr. Sickman demanded some definite proof of their actual source. His requests were rewarded when the scouts brought him the soul tablets of Prince Kuo Ch'in Wang and of two of his consorts. These were official records placed in their tomb, their names written in Chinese on one side and in Manchu on the other. There could be no doubt of the authenticity of these tablets and there was no further reason to doubt the veracity of the agents' statements as to the origin of the textiles.

The dating was further substantiated by four painted fans which came in the same lot as the textiles and which are in the Nelson-Atkins Gallery collection. Three of them are painted by Ch'ien Tsai, an artist famous for his ink paintings of bamboo, orchids and rocks<sup>3</sup>. Ch'ien Tsai was born in 1708; he would thus have been thirty years old at the time of the death of Kuo

Yung Chêng (1723-1735) and they might quite conceivably be of the preceding K'ang Hsi period.

For many years the dating of Chinese textiles has been a matter of conjecture. The periods and fashions have stood in outline through stylistic comparison, but stylistic comparison is of necessity based on guesswork. Following this usual method of dating, that is, studying the textiles together with K'ang Hsi and Yung Chêng porcelains and carved lacquers, the robes and frag-



FIG. 4.—THE HUNDRED CRANES (detail of left front border).—W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

<sup>3</sup>. ARTHUR WALEY, *Index of Chinese Artists*, London, British Museum, 1922.

Ch'in Wang and therefore capable of having painted the fans several years earlier than that. The fans are decorated on the reverse by calligraphy from the brush of Kuan-pao, a Manchu bannerman who took his literary degree in the time of Ch'ien Lung. Kuan-pao was noted as a poet, and was a contemporary of the painter Ch'ien Tsai<sup>4</sup>. The fourth fan was painted by Li Shih-cho, who flourished about 1715-40. Among other honors, this artist painted by Imperial command a picture illustrating a poem by the Emperor K'ang Hsi<sup>3</sup>.

Mr. Sickman returned to this country in 1935 and has been postponing the publication of this material until more information was available. However, from February to May of this year the Nelson-Atkins Gallery had a large exhibition of Chinese Tomb Textiles, which included the Kuo Ch'in Wang finds together with robes of a later date, the latter group from this Gallery's collection as well as from that of the Metropolitan Museum and from the private collection of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Beck of New York. Then in April of 1943 the Minneapolis Institute of Arts opened an extraordinary exhibition of Chinese Textiles. These two shows have made the publishing of this material both timely and imperative. As Mr. Sickman's assistant at that time, I write the story which is truly his, quoting freely and often from his notes.

The Nelson-Atkins Gallery Collection contains besides the nine robes and fragment currently described, many and varied bolts of brocades and damasks, collar and cuff sets, oblong k'ang pillows and pad cover, sutra or book wrappers: about seventy pieces in all. One of the earliest and most beautiful of the Kuo Ch'ing Wang robes belongs to the Metropolitan Museum, as well as a second robe and a number of large fragments. The Minneapolis collection contains at least one robe from this same tomb and a priest's robe made up at a later date of material which was buried there. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston,



FIG. 5. — THE HUNDRED CRANES (detail of right front border). — W. R. Nelson  
Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

has one piece which is from a bolt represented in the Nelson-Atkins Gallery collection. A number of textiles from the same source were bought in Peking by Dr.

<sup>4</sup>. See: Chung Kuo Jen Ming Ta Tz'u Tien, p. 1807.

G. Montell and are in the Etnografiska Museet in Stockholm, Sweden.

In preparing the catalogue of the Minneapolis exhibition, Mrs. Edward H. Sirich, Assistant to the Director; Mr. Russell Plimpton, Director; and Mr. Alan Priest, Curator of Far Eastern Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, produced a theory of dating which takes its basis from the material in the Kuo Ch'in Wang tomb. From the characteristics of the latter they have established the style of the Imperial twelve-symbol Yung Chêng robes, and from the long series of twelve-symbol Imperial robes they are able to work forward to Tao Kuang and back to K'ang Hsi. The theory has already been mentioned in the Minneapolis catalogue and in the bulletin of that museum published April 3, 1943<sup>5</sup>, and is further developed by Mr. Priest in the August bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum<sup>6</sup>.

This present article is not a discussion of the dates within the group of Kuo Ch'in Wang material; that problem is being fully treated by Mr. Priest. This is a description of the robes so that those interested may be more familiar with a little known period of Chinese textiles<sup>7</sup>.

The *Hundred Cranes* coat (fig. 2) is indeed a royal robe, a masterpiece in breadth and scope of design, in technical proficiency and most of all in freedom of spirit. It is like the leisure moments of an imaginative dreamer; Heaven has opened her portals and the air is filled with graceful birds bearing gifts of flowers and fruit. Elegant pines, towering cliffs and rushing water make the border as vivid and exciting as an ink landscape painting. The coat is of golden-brown fancy compound

5. Volume XXXII, no. 14.

6. New series, volume II, no. 1.

7. The writer would like to express her appreciation to Captain Laurence Sickman and Mr. Alan Priest with whose encouragement and assistance she wrote this article.



FIG. 6.—THE BAT MEDALLION.—Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

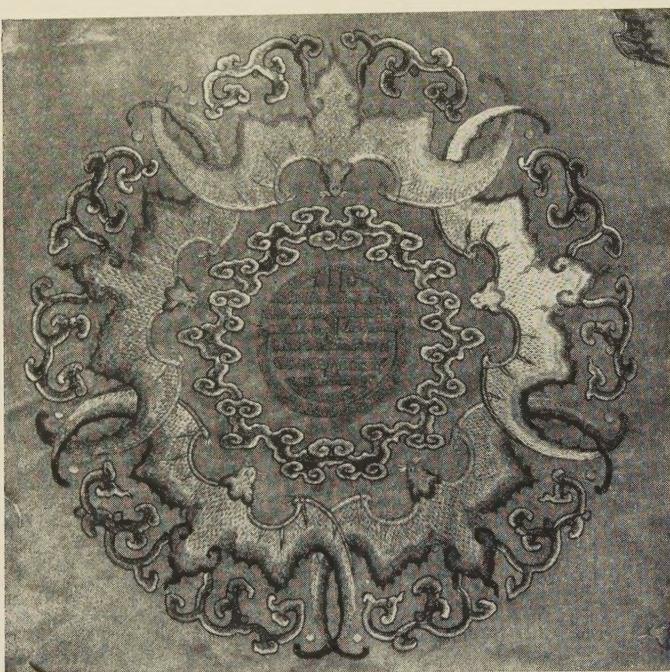


FIG. 7.—THE BAT MEDALLION (detail of medallion).—Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

ers of satin stitch. To the sides, above, below, in back, all space is filled with moving clouds. Pine trees, in a rocky setting at the base of the circle, are lapped by billows and waves which send out sweeping lanes of water like the tide on a sandy beach. The water encompasses the medallion as an outer border — and just as the rush of water in the tide decreases as it mounts the bank, so the volume in this spray slackens until it is just a trickle at the upper edge. Flying cranes join the dragons in their sport. Gold *shou* characters and peach trees laden with fruit are other notes of splendor and well-being.

In the border of the coat (figs. 4-5) there is a profusion of naturalistic pines, their needles cunningly depicted with single threads. One tree is festooned with a flowering vine; another has a creeper with lancet-shaped leaves. The mountainous crags, piled rock on rock, are drawn, as in Chinese painting, with *tien* or dots used for emphasis and distinction. The waves are depicted with billows and circles, and a variety of *ju* or key design similar to that used in the clouds. The water lashes against the realistic rocks and breaks in great towering sprays with long, finger-like projections. On intermittent low rocks cranes pause momentarily, stand regally, brace themselves or contemplate flight through the moving landscape.

There is a spirit of festivity in the coat. From the branches of the pine trees

satin<sup>8</sup>. Tiny bats and clouds in purplish blue outlined in cream and light blue appear in a twill weave. These designs are made by extra weft threads woven from selvage to selvage. The rich background has then been embroidered with nine dragon medallions, clouds, cranes and the magnificent landscape border. The medallions (fig. 3) are so heavily embroidered as to appear superimposed on the satin. The dragons are slender, animated, those in profile moving swiftly in and out of the clouds. They are worked in couched gold thread with eyes, nose, mouth, horns, backbone, curly flowing mane and whisk-

8. As described by NANCY ANDREWS REATH in: *The Weaves of Hand-Loom Fabrics*, p. 36, Pennsylvania Museum, 1927.

ribbons are suspended bearing jade gongs and gold juis. These ornaments float out over the water and repeat the rhythms of the spray as though all were joining in a great song to the celestial abodes. Over the figured background of the coat there are embroidered seventy-six cranes each carrying in his bill a gift — flowers, peaches, bamboo, jui, sun flower, pine, plum. Throughout the rocky landscape there are twenty-four more of the graceful cranes, making our title of *The Hundred Cranes* an apt description. This coat has also been called the *Wave and Pine Tree* or the *Birthday Coat*. The latter title was used when it was shown in London in 1935-36, at the Burlington House's International Exhibition of Chinese Art. The pine, the crane, the fungus of immortality, the peaches, the *shou* character, the bat, the bamboo, the plum blossom — all are symbols of longevity, and the elaborateness of embroidered fancy satin in a complexity of design strengthens the argument that this coat was made for a very special celebration.



FIG. 9.—THE LANTERN COAT (detail of border).—W. R. Nelson  
Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.



FIG. 8.—THE BAT MEDALLION (detail of border).—Metropolitan  
Museum of Art, New York.

The *Bat Medallion* coat<sup>9</sup> (fig. 6) is of goose yellow satin on which are embroidered eight medallions, each comprised of five bats symbolizing the Five Blessings — old age, wealth, health, love of virtue and a natural death (fig. 7). The wings of the bats are outspread and intertwined to make a closely knit design. The circle is completed by scrolls filling in the outermost spaces. In the center is a large *shou* character in couched gold thread, surrounded by a halo of ribbon-like

9. Embroidered satin, 50½" long.

clouds worked in satin stitch and outlined in gold thread.

Over the background of the coat bats skim merrily in all directions. Some seem to be moving lazily and sedately; others zip down as though ready to pounce on the jewels in the waves. The bold drawing and simplicity of the lower border (fig. 8) suggests that this is one of the earliest coats in the group. There are three elements here which re-occur so often that I have found it convenient to term them the jui-circle-billow design. The jui is a stylized wave derived from the fungus pattern. The circles are easily identified, representing the mounting exuber-

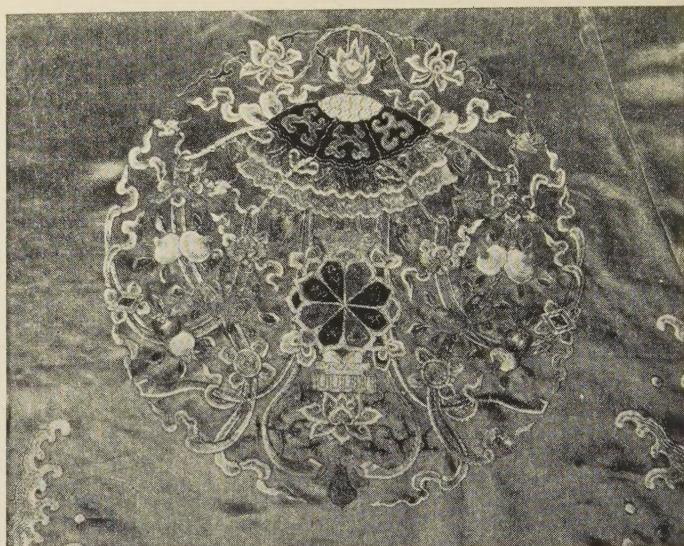


FIG. 11. — THE LANTERN COAT (detail of medallion). — W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

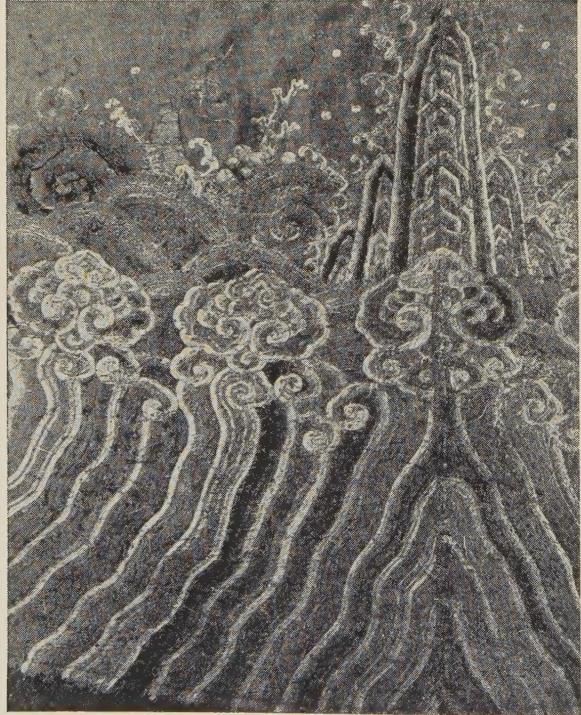


FIG. 10. — THE LANTERN COAT (detail of reverse of border). — W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

ance of the waves which gain in volume and speed as the storm progresses. Finally there are the billows which are the undulating swells of the sea . . . The sureness of the drawing, the largeness of the conception are distinguishing features of this coat, as well as the *Lantern* and *Giant Wave* Coats (figs. 9-11 and 17-18).

The jui is done in satin stitch, shading from dark or medium blue to a light shade and cream outlined with couched gold thread. The billows are green, the upper third shaded from light to deep blue, medium blue and cream. The circles and waves are in the same shades as this upper part of the billow. These designs have gold thread couched in parallel lines following the main line of the drawing and no more than  $\frac{3}{16}$ th of an inch



FIG. 12. — THE CLOUD AND WAVE. — Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

ons which seem to be saluting each other jauntily with thrown-back heads and up-raised paws. A descending bat holds in his mouth a small gold *shou* character. The cuff, band and collar all have a quarter-inch border of couched gold at the outer edge. The gold is wound around a silk thread, twenty of such threads being needed for this particular width.

The colors show no evidence of fading either on the obverse or reverse sides. In addition to the shades of blue and green, there are a variety of creams, tans, browns and greys. Undoubtedly the most charming feature of the design is the individual aspect of the bats, where grace and variety are the rule and the staleness of repetition is an unknown quantity.

The *Lantern* coat<sup>10</sup>, existing only in fragmentary condition, is of gold satin.

apart. At the center and back of the coat the earth is represented by a stylized form of piled rock. In the waves are the sacred jewels in groups of three, four, five, seven or eight, branches of coral and flaming jewels. The latter are in couched gold thread, and the breaking spray which sheds drops in a cream colored satin stitch looks like perfectly round pearls.

This coat, as the *Hundred Cranes* coat, has its original dark blue satin collar, sleeve bands and cuffs. Ribbon clouds of couched gold thread separate medallions of confronted drag-

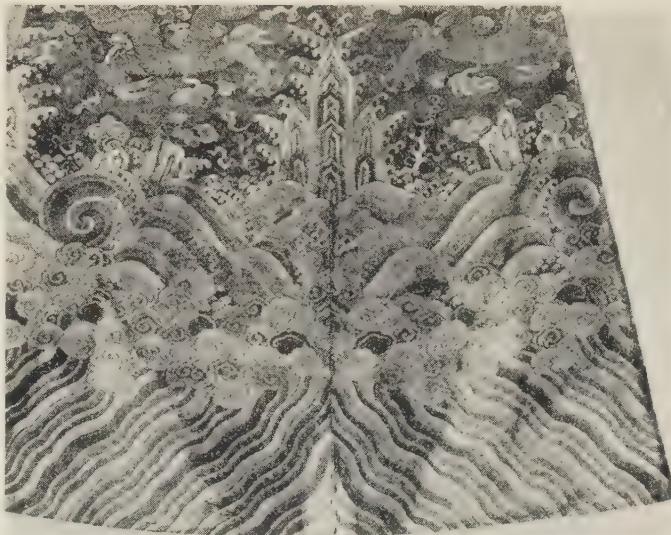


FIG. 13. — THE CLOUD AND WAVE (detail of border). — Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

<sup>10</sup>. Embroidered satin, fragment 36" deep.



FIG. 10.—THE CRANE AND GATE (Jui-t'ing) patterned satin. 5' 10" x 2' 10". Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis.

manner. They are done in a variety of combinations of color, the same shades as the linear waves but with a preponderance of blue, green and steel grey. There is one color which has no metallic quality a deep sapphire blue, which can easily be distinguished in the photograph.

The lantern medallions (fig. 11) are similar in general pattern with minor variations in color and an individual decorative motive for the central light chamber. The main design is a three-tiered canopy with jewel and flame finial. Four jui-shaped metal projections of couched gold thread terminate in dragons' heads. Over these extended arms ribbons are hung, suspending jade gongs, fungi, Buddha fingers, lotus flowers, pomegranates and "cash", the ribbons forming a neat

Its blues, greens, red-browns, creams and white have a metallic sheen, reminding one of polished steel and of objects seen in the lantern's glow.

The lower half of the robe, upon which are the border and four medallions, remains together with four other medallions cut from the body of the coat and mark this as one of the loveliest of textiles. The border (fig. 9) is so similar to the *Bat Medallion* coat that a first glance at figs. 8 and 9 may be confusing. The color is much more complicated here, however, for the circles and billows are treated in an individual



FIG. 15.—THE CRANE AND GATE (detail of border). 5' 10" x 2' 10". Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis.

bow knot or simple twist before reaching their shaped end.

The centers of the lanterns, as mentioned, differ one from the other in stylized flower patterns. Each of these flowers is executed in the fine Peking knot stitch. The only other textile of the group making use of this stitch is the *Hundred Cranes* coat where it is used on the birds' heads. A single thread used as a darning stitch achieves an effect of basketry woven in a diaper pattern (fig. 11; see the section below the jewel finial). On this particular robe the jui-circle-billow design, sacred jewels, gold bells, coral branches, jade gongs and quivering spray are all outlined in a double instead of a single thread of couched gold.

The Metropolitan has recently acquired a coat which fits into this group and is either from the same tomb or from one of the same period (fig. 12). Designated as the *Cloud and Wave* coat<sup>11</sup>, it is of satin cloth embroidered in two tones of brown with nine dragons in couched gold thread. The dragons in full face or profile are tensely active and seem to be emitting a roar of satisfaction over holding the sacred jewel of the law.

The background has long ribbon clouds which rise like smoke and are quite as penetrating. Dozens of flying bats move in and out of the clouds. The border (fig. 13) is based on the jui-circle-billow design but the juis, instead of being the simple key pattern, are broken up into separate motives; the edges of each are foliate as in a floral design.

There are mountainous billows and two circles add strength in their boldness. Earth is represented by towering peaks, and more individually by naturalistic rocks from which fungi protrude. Jewels appear in the jui waves and on the billowing water. Branches of coral in silk threads, conch shells and musical stones in gold



FIG. 16.—THE LADIES IN THE GARDEN (or The Water Garden).—W. R. Nelson  
Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

<sup>11</sup>. Embroidered satin, 51" long.



FIG. 17.—THE GIANT WAVE.—W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum,  
Kansas City, Mo.

with the greatest variety of effect.

The whole puce satin background is embroidered with a honeycomb diaper enclosing multi-petaled flowers. The satin stitch blossoms are outlined by single threads, darned to form alternate octagons and squares. Against this and through clouds, dragons dash forward clutching sacred jewels in their claws, a descending bat upholds a jade gong, cranes twist in flight and beflowered emblems of Taoist symbolism are carefully distributed. The jui-circle-billow design of the border is closely related to that of the Cloud and Wave coat, with the huis having foliage edges. There are broad, even billows as though the waters were deep but not angry. In the center these waves wash up against a rocky shore where a great gate stands with trees on either side (fig. 15). This is the only coat of the group which includes architecture in its ornaments as skillfully portrayed as the usual conch shell or flaming jewel. To the right and left of center there are other buildings, a double roofed pavilion and a peaked pagoda.

The arm bands, instead of being applied, were embroidered on the sleeve. The original collar and cuffs remain, having the same honeycomb diaper background and jewel tones of the body of the robe.

thread are other familiar motives.

The robe must have given a rich and opulent effect originally, for the large dragons are of couched gold and the unusually wide border made a lavish use of this metal by outlining all of the waves and huis and veining the billows, circles and spray. The collar and cuffs are of the period though the difference in type of rocks depicted suggests that they were not made for this garment.

The *Crane and Gate* coat<sup>12</sup> (fig. 14) has the rich, throbbing glow of a peacock's train spread out in all its glory. Blues, greens, tans, creams the same colors used again and again, but

12. Embroidered satin, 50" long.

Delicacy and refinement are expressed in a variety of ways in the embroidered satin coat, *Ladies in the Garden* or *The Water Garden*<sup>13</sup> (fig. 16). Three fragments were rescued, the largest of which is illustrated. The main pattern must have consisted of eight medallions against a plain background over which the eight Taoist Symbols are distributed in such a way as to seem sprinkled rather than symmetrically arranged, as they actually were.

The border is a garden pool from which rise lotus in bud and bloom. The water, indicated by line stitches, ripples slightly as though there is a suggestion of breeze. Then it swirls



FIG. 19.—THE DRAGON MEDALLION.—W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

under and around eroded garden rocks of different shapes and colors which form an important part of the pool. Perched on these rocks, flying above the water, swimming, fighting, calling, all throughout this border appear pairs of Mandarin ducks—in China the symbol of domestic felicity.

The large medallions show ladies enjoying themselves in their gardens. In these circular designs, the various elements bend gracefully to make the tondo composition. At the left two ladies seated on opposite sides of a low



FIG. 18.—THE GIANT WAVE (detail of border).—W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

table are playing *Ko* or Chinese chess. One of them appears quite satisfied with the progress of the game while her opponent leans forward tensely. A third lady is an amused bystander. Up on a terrace, separated from them by a low fence, two more

13. Embroidered satin, fragment 49" long.

ladies approach carrying a tea pot and covered dish. Garden rocks, tree peonies, banana plant, paulownia trees and clouds combine to make the framing circle.

Under a weeping willow, in the medallion on the right, a lady is about to play on the *ch'in*, a long musical instrument. An eroded rock very neatly serves her as both table and chair. Two companions stand near and a young attendant absent-mindedly waves a fan while looking off in the opposite direction. Another lady is approaching this group by way of a "camel's back" bridge over a small stream. The newcomer will undoubtedly make possible a duet, for her attendant is following with another *ch'in*.

The uppermost circle shows the *Lao T'ai T'ai* seated in a two-wheeled chair with two attendant servants and four ladies in attendance. It is apparently evening, for a lantern is hung from the chair's canopy and two of the three ladies in advance

of this group are carrying lanterns. The whole party has come down a sloping terrace and is meeting by a narrow fenced-in promontory.

The satin cloth of this robe is stained a fairly even shade of tan but originally it must have been lighter. The embroidery now is limited to browns and tans, blue and green, all blending into a melody of grace and charm. Almost all of the embroidery is in satin stitch with a prominent use of simple outline and long single darning stitches, the latter to indicate pine needles, grass and basketry. Many of the scattered emblems and various details in the medallions — notably the *Lao T'ai T'ai*'s collar and the strings of the *ch'in* — were originally outlined in couched gold thread.



FIG. 20. — THE GIANT DRAGON. — W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

Notable in size and proportion, the *Giant Wave coat*<sup>14</sup> (fig. 17), now stained and spotted, with gold washed away and colors faded out, continues to startle one

14. Brocaded satin, 63" long.

with its magnificence of design. The extreme length (63") the slit skirt, the square turnback collar, the outstanding boldness of the pattern make one wonder if this might have been a theatrical robe with all qualities exaggerated for dramatic intensity. Without doubt it is a coat of superlatives.

The satin cloth is the finest in the group. The warp and weft threads are so fine and so numerous that the background looks as though made of suede instead of woven fabric. The extra weft threads added for the brocading appear in contrast to be heavier than they actually are.

There are eight medallions which enclose gold thread dragons. The beasts are tense and taut as though they had just turned to stare and glare. Placidity is not an ideal in this robe. A trickle of water to complete the circle would be out of keeping with the spirit; a dancing flame forms the perfect crown.

Below there are the waves (fig. 18), waves in jui design, billows which roll and thunder. There are no circles, for circles seem to roll on the surface of the ocean, and here there is no surface. All is in upheaval — it is as though we looked up at gigantic rocky cliffs and saw the spray leaping beyond their height.

There are branches of coral in the water and jewels in groups of four, five, six and seven. Other ornaments, the conch shell, book, artemisia leaf, horn cup and precious lozenges were originally done in gold thread. The coat has been washed and no gold is visible on the surface. However, when the original lining was loosened, there was a small but impressive shower of gold dust.

This original lining is of silk damask with a repeated design of flame medallions enclosing dragons seen in profile. In alternate rows they face to right and left.

It is impossible to determine the original colors as all parts are now in tan in varying degrees. From these variations though, one may be sure that this robe was once multicolored with fiery dragons in gold.

The *Dragon Medallion* robe<sup>15</sup> (fig. 19) becomes a hymn to that imaginative creature, sleek, elegant, fastidious. It is all in shades of brown with gold thread



FIG. 21. — THE GIANT DRAGON (detail of border). — W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

15. Brocaded damask, 60" long.

dragons in the large medallions. The background is of satin damask, with an all over pattern of dragons enclosed in circles of cloud and flame. They are seen in profile, springing to the right, bounding to the left in alternate rows.

Of the original large brocaded medallions, only five and a part remain, as the lower section of the back, the sleeves and the inner flap have disappeared and are replaced with modern satin. The original collar also is missing.

The main dragons are long jowled beasts sporting above billows of water and completely framed by a band of finely drawn clouds. The wide curves give buoyancy to the design and the dragons seem to be bouncing on the billows. This same effect of lightness is felt in the coat, no doubt largely because there is no rock and wave border at the bottom.



FIG. 22. — THE GIANT DRAGON (detail of reverse of border). — W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

20), the extra weft threads are floated on the back (fig. 22), making an inner padding and hence warm interlining for the wearer. Brocaded on the brown satin are nine five-clawed dragons, these animals done with a great deal of vigor and animation.



FIG. 23. — THE BUTTERFLY ROBE (detail of skirt, brocaded satin). — W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

The weaving of this coat must have presented a knotty problem. The damask background runs into but not through the large brocaded circles. The effect is like embroidery on damask and the execution of this difficult weave must have required an expert knowledge of technique.

In the *Giant Dragon*<sup>16</sup>, the heaviest coat of the group (fig.

16. Brocaded satin, 52" long.

The head and body are of gold thread with the eyes, nose, mouth, horns, nails of claws and backbone in silk thread. The bushy, beetling eyebrows, slightly crossed eyes, snorting nose and sharp-toothed snarl determine the aspect of the beast. The tenseness of the curve in the drawing of the body and the twisted legs accentuate their ferocity.

Throughout the background large groups of the jui clouds move with stately grandeur. They are constructed as cumulus billows in evolving layers, and they are more varied than the clouds of the heavens. Within one group there are such combinations of color as brown, tan, blue, green and cream, the darker colors in the center bordered by a light edge. But the drawing of these clouds has the same purposeful vigor as the dragons, it is as though each group were a controlled unit of importance, a planet on its regular course through the firmament. They are the quiet steady background against which the dragons crouch, spring, dash and fight.

The border (fig. 21) is again the jui-circle-billow design, but more involved than the *Bat Medallion*, *Lantern* or *Giant Wave* coats. The juis are chrysanthemum-like in form, and the billows are broad and strong. The circles appear midst the billows and there is an aspect of churning and excited depths. Jewels in groups of three, seven or nine, branches of coral and the "cash", book, conch shell, fungus and swastika in gold thread are on each panel of the divided skirt.

The collar has been removed and the sleeve band is a part of the main body of the coat. The original cuffs are of dark blue satin with an excited dragon seen full face amid clouds and spray.

The small fragment which remains of the *Butterfly Robe*<sup>17</sup> is of such beauty and importance that it is included in this description of coats. It is of gold satin brocaded in colored silk in medium blue, medium green, cream, brownish-red, yellow, the oft-used gold and the much rarer silver. The silver appears considerably darkened in contrast to the still



FIG. 24. — THE DEER AND PLUM TREE. — W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

brilliant gold.

Butterflies, bats, orchids and roses speak of summer and feminine loveliness.

17. Brocaded satin, fragment 41" long.



FIG. 25. — THE QUATREFOIL AND TENDRIL. — W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

nature seen in a fairy world touched by a wand of gold and silver.

The *Deer and Plum Tree* coat<sup>18</sup> is an unusual light blue satin brocaded with butterfly medallions, with a border of flowering landscape (fig. 24). Two butterflies form each of the main designs, their bodies turned, their wings reversed so that they appear to be portrayed in flight. Delicate scrolls fill extra spaces in a similar fashion to those in the *Bat Medallion*.

Over the satin background there are orchids, butterflies, bats, chrysanthemums and other forms of floral and insect life not drawn from nature but conceived in an imaginative and decorative way.

The lower robe is a combination of landscape and water with two elegant *fēng huang* flying toward one another from opposite sides of the garment. A pine, eroded rocks and growing fungus are part of the countryside enjoyed by a sprightly spotted deer which seems to be sniffing the delightful aroma of a flowering plum.

Steep waves, angular but not towering, break through the plain background to form the border. There are waves and spray of the familiar key and finger pattern, and bells, jewels, coral and bamboo midst the splashing water. Jauntily riding the crest is an open shell brimming with welcome “cash”. Intermittently throughout the waves, garden rocks of couched gold thread add strength to the base.

Some of the motives are in pairs as that illustrated (fig. 23) and sing of domestic joys, large and small, the male and female, the Yang and Yin.

The front left half of the coat, from lower edge to breast, is sufficient to distinguish several special characteristics. The design is not based on a series of medallions nor does it have a prominent lower border. It is composed of fairly large motives arranged in rows, two subjects alternating in a given line though appearing different through the varied use of color.

Each flower and butterfly is a delicate design of patterned realism. They are the essence of

<sup>18</sup>. Brocaded satin, fragment 54" long.

In this coat the water appears in a friendly mood, bringing in treasures, bobbing up and down in quick short leaps. The billows gradually increase toward the center where they serve as a throne-like base for a wonderful eroded rock of gold with tree peonies, once of silver and color, branching out in four directions.

All the robes considered thus far have been formal garments, richly brocaded or embroidered. There are two coats which are perhaps summer robes and are less stately than the others. They are lighter in weight and hence more clinging to the body; they have no collars or cuffs, and the pattern is formed by action of the loom instead of by additional threads.

The *Quatrefoil and Tendril*<sup>19</sup> is of tan satin damask, the design in a plain weave appearing light against the satin background. The pattern is based on a system of alternate quatrefoil medallions from which branch three variously curling tendrils. Each of the medallions encloses four objects: an ax, the "cash", a branch of coral and books in one, a lozenge, flaming jewel, jui head and rhinoceros horns in the other (fig. 25).

Connecting links between the medallion-tendril units are formed by four groups of objects: Buddha fingers and a stone chime, a bell and sceptre, a bell, fan and flower and a ring with joint of confronted dragon heads to which are fastened a flower and gourd. These motives together make a rich all-over pattern. The robe still has its original lining, a simple patterned silk with alternate linear designs of peaches, Buddha fingers and lotus.

The *Blue Lattice* coat<sup>20</sup> is of light blue satin damask with lattice work design (fig. 26). Vertical columns are made up of rectangles enclosing symbols of the spring and summer seasons. There are eight subjects in all, each of four columns having two



FIG. 26. — THE BLUE LATTICE — W. R. Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

19. 48" long.

20. 55" long.

different motives, with the next four columns repeating those designs.

The familiar cracked ice and prunus blossom motive so popular on K'ang Hsi blue and white porcelain ginger jars alternates with Buddha fingers, sceptre and fan design (*shêng-jui-fan*). Next, butterflies on an interlacing cash background are adjacent to a flowering plum branch. Bats and clouds are separated from an oblong of tree peonies, and the dragon and *shou* character alternate with a quatrefoil against a diaper background of inverted swastikas.

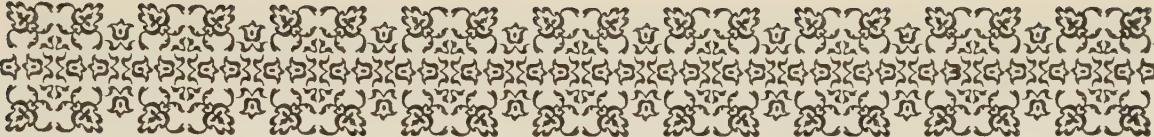
The symbols suggest this was a hot weather garment; and the fine, light colored satin would have been suitable to the season.

Briefly stated, the Kuo Ch'in Wang robes are of brocaded satin, brocaded silk, embroidered satin and satin damask. The silk embroidery threads are fine and tightly spun. These are chiefly applied as satin stitch, but include variations of the darning stitch and, in two robes, the Peking knot. There is a lavish use of gold thread by couching and brocading. The colors are generally rather dark and sombre but rich and glowing in tonality. The patterns vary greatly from landscape scenes to repeated dragon medallions. In every case the motives speak of the court, five-clawed dragons and Imperial gardens, lotus pools and gold strung lutes.

Those are the simple facts, but it is the vision which entralls. The fine materials, the excellent craftsmanship, the imagination and restraint of extolling nature and her limitless delights, unceasing liveliness, subtle humor — all of these qualities are our legacies from the magnificence which was Prince Kuo Ch'in Wang's.

LINDSAY HUGHES





# SOME ASPECTS OF ITALIAN RENAISSANCE SCULPTURE IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

## I

**I**T is somewhat paradoxical to concentrate on sculpture in an article dealing with the National Gallery in Washington, D. C. The new Gallery is undoubtedly the greatest achievement in the recent history of Museums, but nonetheless it is a typical gallery in the conventional development of the XIX century. It is a picture gallery, its overwhelming essence is painting — to be exact, easel painting. It is true that, thanks to its amazingly rapid development, also other fields of old and modern art have been included, and since its inception an important group of sculptures forms a basic element of the assemblage.

The emphasis on that dualism of painting and sculpture is striking. It might recall the Uffizi. The addition of a group of precious objets d'art from the Widener Collection stresses the coincidence; even their confinement in special treasure rooms, corresponding to that isolated corner, Cabinetto delle Gemme, in the Uffizi is analogous. The comparison is not merely complimentary. *Vestigia terrent*: there were generations who, strolling through the old Florentine Galleria, devoted all of their interest and enthusiasm to the so-called Classic statues and did not care much for Giotto and Masaccio, Botticelli or Ghirlandajo.



FIG. 1. — AGOSTINO DI DUCCIO. — Madonna and Child. Marble. — National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art.

At the present time it is certainly the reverse, in the National Gallery as well as in all of the others, and it is possible that in the future the usual identification of a gallery of art with a painting gallery may be considered again a somewhat anachronistic assumption. Hence the appearance of sculpture in isolated groups but in rank and file with the master works of painting is remarkable. This purely artistic attitude is still rather exceptional. The National Gallery is the first large gallery of art in this country in which painting and sculpture are considered equally significant, and,

though not always equivalent, equal in rank. In this connection it may be a landmark in the further development of understanding and collecting of sculpture. To comprehend the present achievement — indeed a more than promising start — it might be fair to consider some points in the rather strange history of collecting sculpture, an understanding of which may even clarify conditions for the future development of the Gallery.

Considering the Gallery as an artistic entity, the striking point is the small number of assembled sculpture and, with few exceptions, their narrow limitation to only two periods and countries. Beyond any questions of mere arrangement or taste this illustrates a typical attitude and a certain stage in the history of collecting. There are actually 128 sculptures, except the small bronzes, medals, etc., and 846 paintings. This numerical proportion or disproportion between paintings and sculptures should not be taken as an indication of the greater rarity of sculpture of a kind. Neither may it be explained sufficiently by merely personal predilections: the sculptures given to the National Gallery came mostly from collections in which

the share of painting and sculpture was balanced, as in the Mackay and Stroganoff Collections, or where sculpture definitely prevailed, as in the Timbal and Dreyfus Collections. The collectors of this generation were indeed exceptionally many-sided, but even in their fortunate period painting was the better known and more appreciated art, and undoubtedly the more popular. There were once, in the Renaissance and Baroque periods, sophisticated discussions about the presumed superiority of painting or sculpture, certainly they should not be revived by the display in the National Gallery; however, the average man, when asked: "What is Art?", thinks of a picture, whether it is the *Madonna della Sedia* or Renoir's *Dancers* or *Washington Crossing the Delaware*.

But the relative popularity of the different forms of art in art collecting springs from complicated and even ambiguous sources and depends not only upon hobbies and loves, education, knowledge, taste and conviction, but on many other factors. Sculpture was not always over-shadowed by painting. On the contrary, at the memorable start of collecting in modern times sculpture — but only the classic Graeco-Roman — was even dominant. These first collections in Renaissance Italy were based on Humanism and the spectacle was repeated, as the result of another Classicism, in the early XIX century at the no less memorable start of public galleries.

As the Renaissance Italian collectors did not care whether a sculpture was an original or a copy, so those of the early XIX century did not hesitate to express their devotion to classic sculpture by making tremendous collections of casts. To obtain them was the chief aim of almost every new gallery, for which it spent unbelievable amounts; the casts were exhibited in pretentious buildings; great works of art, even entire collections, are known to have been refused, in spite of being less expensive because of the general enthusiasm for casts. This enthusiasm, of course, does not in the least represent a lack of interest in sculpture, but it betrays an amazing lack of understanding of the primary artistic quality of the actual object as an individual piece of work. The fundamental importance given to casts is one reason why sculpture has been collected only in recent times in reference to its absolute originality, that is to say at a later period than any other kind of art.

In the field of Classic sculpture the short-comings of this attitude were compensated for at an early date, especially by the revelation of original material from excavations. Except for those representatives of the Classic Revival in Italy, other groups of European sculpture had little or no share in the formation of these galleries of casts, and the delayed appreciation of these groups is a chapter for itself.

Before the foundation of public museums, the great picture galleries of the Baroque period were established and grew into admirable collections, supported not only by the increasing interest in the history of painting but also by the great development of contemporary painting which became the climax of all XIX century art. Artistic life was increasingly centered in painting, and the great epochs of

European sculpture were in a difficult position due to both the continuing tradition of classicism and the fascination for the manifold expressions of painting of any time and country. It is primarily the result of Romanticism that sculptures not corresponding to the standards of Classic art were considered worthy of a place in collections and museums. Particularly, mediaeval sculptures including Quattrocento were concentrated on at the beginning of this new trend of collecting chiefly as memorable survivals of the past. Their artistic quality was considered as accessory, they were viewed as a document in the history of art illustrating a step in its development. When systematically collected they were not exhibited in Art Galleries, in connection with painting and classic sculpture, but were assembled with antiques and curios. Since the establishment of Museums of Decorative Arts and Historic Museums — creations of the XIX century — they have been placed there as examples of past styles and old craftsmanship.

At the same time, both museums and amateurs developed a new tendency that grew as ominous as the vogue of casts: they looked not only for documents of the past but tried to *reconstruct* the past. Sculpture was assembled with works of any kind to create scenery in a definite style — the representation of "Historic Styles", although a modern conception, became a favorite task. Originally connected with the severe Gothic and Tuscan revival in architecture, this unique phenomenon of romantic "historicism" became more and more the expression of a particular picturesque attitude typical of the later XIX century, which produced a new, rather absurd ideal for modern houses and rooms, even a token or disguise of the social aspirations in that period. The hitherto neglected sculptures were now favorite objects and entered, in the same way as tapestry and armor, into Gothic and Renaissance living rooms, libraries and hotel lobbies.

The interest in sculpture and its popularity were increasing but, again, certainly not primarily for the original artistic importance of the work. Sculptures were at that time often even more desired than paintings. However, the collecting of paintings followed the tradition seeking quality in a picture which even in overcrowded galleries remains a single object isolated by its frame. But sculpture was collected in order to suggest the general character and mood of a period; its appreciation was subordinated to its adaptability to preconceived stylistic and decorative effects; embellishing alterations, additions, diminutions, assimilations or any kind of "restoration" were not tabooed. The collecting and enjoyment of sculpture at that time is comparable to that of classic sculpture in the Renaissance, but the same generation which endeavored to re-establish the original state of the classic fragments by the radical removal of earlier additions was not at all adverse to modifying Gothic and Renaissance sculptures to its own ideas and purposes. For this reason fine sculptures of this period in original condition are very rare; those of highest quality are rarer than outstanding paintings, and thus the small number in



FIG. 2. — AMADEO. — *Madonna di Latte.* — National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.

proportion to only thirty-four sculptures of all other schools combined.

But, figures mean nothing and artistic results are difficult to define. The single objects are mostly well known; they do not present discoveries nor provoke sensational discussion. They are not and cannot be the fundamental monuments which still are, we hope, at the Churches and Squares in Florence; and the basis of our knowledge of Renaissance sculpture will not be altered by the display in the National Gallery, admirable as it is. Classifications should not be over-simplified, but whoever questions the importance of this collection for the nation must accept the quite definite fact that the representation in the National Gallery of one great chapter in the history of sculpture, the Italian Early Renaissance, is the finest and most important in this country, only rivaled by the four great collections of Renaissance sculpture in Europe.

the National Gallery represents a highly remarkable achievement.

While the style of presentation of sculpture at the National Gallery is the reverse of XIX century tradition, this cannot be said of the collection itself. In opposition to the universal character of the Gallery, the collection of sculptures is limited to Italian Renaissance and later French works. The latter include outstanding examples especially of the XVIII century, but the Italian sculpture forms a unique conclusive collection of at least one period. Ninety-four sculptures as compared to four hundred and forty-seven Italian paintings represent an amazing majority in



FIG. 3.—OPUS NINI, 1455.—Astorgio Manfredi.—Widener Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.

which triumphs in the recent display. Other enthusiasts might plead quick revision; but we who have survived the craze for Quattrocento sculpture know that its importance is not mere love of Florence, fascination for refined expressive lines, delicacy of charming Madonnas, or the somewhat literary appeal of enchanting women and bold, youthful men — and it is unquestionable that the reaction of any generation needs sometimes to be re-interpreted. We also know that the master works of any time defy the changes of fashion and that we should neither take amiss nor conceal the fact that the collection exhibits the conception of Quattrocento sculpture in the spirit of the XIX century.

This somewhat retrospective attitude can hardly be the outcome of a plan, but results from the provenance of the works from very representative and consciously selective collections of an older generation. It is interesting to see how their assemblage becomes a single collection, the contents of which converge in an almost systematic presentation of one school alone, and it is surprising how this common predilection produces a display whose harmonious effect is striking. This is indeed the impressive result of a typical and rather determined attitude towards Italian art, and it is the inherited spirit of that generation which defines the particular mark of the new collection. Also in the great old museums and galleries a

The nucleus of the collection is Quattrocento Florence; it is composed almost exclusively of already published and even famous works by or attributed to the great Masters. To see them again is an experience which creates a new reaction to each work; but, more than that, by their assemblage there is a revealing encounter with a new *collection*, conclusive enough to concern our attitude towards Italian Quattrocento Sculpture as a whole. Its almost programmatic concentration, not to say isolation, in the Gallery should and will contribute to a better understanding of its definite position.

The emphatic predilection for Quattrocento sculpture needs no comment. It might be considered a late result of so-called Pre-Raphaelism; it is this esthetic attitude and mentality

representation of sculpture reveals an important or fundamental share of enthusiastic collectors. It is illuminating to reconstruct their contributions which cause us to remember that a fine private collection is and always has been a very good thing — but this greatest assemblage of sculpture collections in our days, admirable creations of this generation and perhaps the last, points out that the often criticized, slower but methodically planned and developed way of collecting in public museums also has its merits. When compared with the few other outstanding collections of Renaissance and especially Quattrocento sculpture, the individual but limited character of its representation in the National Gallery is quite apparent, and this impression is stressed by its contrast with the collection of paintings. Here the universality of the program is based on and produces an inclusive conception and the utmost possible objective attitude, and the necessarily inherent subjective preconceptions are easily checked by the long tradition of selective collecting, by study and criticism through generations, and by the abundant richness of the material. In the representation of sculpture the fondness of this generation of great collectors for esthetic and historic values of a special kind is still predominant. For this reason, even such a beautiful, rich and suggestive assemblage is only an approach to that inclusive objectivity and organic unity which distinguish — or, at least, should distinguish the display of a great artistic phenomenon in a public gallery from a private collection. This does not concern the standard of quality but one should question how in the rather imperative attitude of the display the effect of temporary conceptions and subjective reactions can be balanced. There is little to be done by modification of details like changes in the arrangement, nuances in the appreciation of a single work, or replacement of an antiquated attribution, but there must be scope for a deliberately planned consolidating development of this section in its substantial contents. One should realize that it is the outstanding importance of



FIG. 4. — PIETRO ARETINO, Bronze. — Jacopo Sansovino. — Widener Collection, National Gallery of Art. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art.

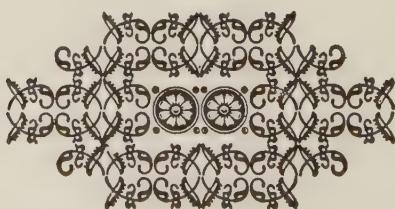
the assemblage which needs and also deserves a systematic completion by some works whose own character is strong enough to round out the present display, not as a corrective of an irrelevant deficiency but as a decisive element or significant accent in the constructive representation of Italian sculpture. The objective importance of the section is too great to overestimate the concurrent effect of a limited concept and subjective inclinations. However, older artistic ideas and ideals typical of this generation though formed in the XIX century, and practically the foundation of the assemblage in an astoundingly brief, intensive and concentrated activity of a few years or decades, define the particular attitude of this collection.

This is felt more positively in the general spirit than in specific qualities, and more in the proportionate weight of the representative groups than in a single work.

The collection includes Donatello's *Martelli David* which in itself is of greater importance than a display of many other figures would be; but its appearance also recalls that an extensive and in its way many-sided representation of Florentine Quattrocento sculpture which includes only one example of statuary is somewhat paradoxical. Great examples of statuary are, it is true, extremely rare, but here this one work is the only representation of statuary of all countries and periods before the XVI century! In a great collection of sculpture this affects the basic conception not only of quattrocento sculpture but of sculpture itself. Actually in spite of Donatello's *David* the emphasis given to Early Renaissance Florence is mainly to be seen in two other categories of works: the Madonna reliefs and portrait busts. The former are indeed most typical of this school, but as works of art more intimately related to Quattrocento painting than as expressions of creative sculpture. Their wide representation is a common feature of all collections formed in the last generation, while the amazing display of portrait busts is a special and the most surprising mark of this section in the National Gallery.

A review of its rich contents — in the second part of this article — will show that these predilections not only concern the subject matter but also the artistic appreciation of the collection.

GEORG SWARZENSKI





# ART, TIME AND ETERNITY

ONE of the most bewildering phenomena of the history of thought is that which has been called by A. O. Lovejoy "philosophical pathos". Philosophical pathos is roughly the emotional force of certain abstract terms, a force whose influence is felt even when the terms in question are undefined. Among these effects is the propulsion they give thinkers towards the things which they are supposed to name, so that the thinkers will use them not merely as descriptive terms, but also as terms of value. For instance, in our own times such terms as "vital", "creative", "dynamic", are both terms of praise as well as adjectives describing something. To be vital is better than to be mechanical, to be creative is better than to be sterile, to be dynamic is better than to be static.

In the classical tradition the two sacred words were Unity and Eternity. To be One was not only to have a certain discoverable property which presumably differentiated the thing that had it from other things which were multiple, it was also to have a very noble property. To be multiple was to be bad and ugly and even in some men's minds unreal; to be unified was to be perfect and beautiful and alone real. So with temporality; to exist in time was to change, and to change was a metaphysical misfortune, meaning that the changing had no identity and thus no genuine goodness, beauty, or reality. Put in such bald language, the matter seems somewhat grotesque. Surely no one would have condemned anything simply because it had parts or grew from something simple into something complex. But on the contrary, until the XIX century very few philosophers argued otherwise. In fact, it took about two thousand years before people admitted that the world of space and time could be real or good or beautiful. It might have a kind of reality and value, but it was the lowest kind, and the main task of philosophy consisted in seeking the One behind the Many and the Eternal behind the Temporal.

If one asks what is the explanation of this, the answer must lie not in the field of logic but in those of history, psychology, sociology even. For, as every freshman knows, the postulates of a system of thought are chosen not because of the evidence — for if they were based on evidence they would not be postulates, but upon the results which they produce. What results men have wanted from their thinking must there-

fore be determined by extra-logical motives. I do not and cannot pretend to have the answer to these questions but several have been suggested. One may imagine that men living in times of revolution would seek repose in stability, that men who have everything to lose by change would seek immobility. One may see in man's fear of death a desire to prolong life into eternity, as some pathetic souls seek to perpetuate at least their names by having them inscribed on gravestones or public buildings. Change is of course an occasion for loss as well as for gain; time has for centuries been portrayed as the great destroyer and only occasionally as the creator, though every change involves both destruction and creation. All these and many more motives may have impelled men to push through the screen of perception to something "deeper" which they called "reality".

But there is one possible reason which is peculiarly germane to the criticism of works of art. Our language, as everyone knows, relies on common nouns and adjectives to name and describe things. In fact our descriptive sentences convert the most obvious processes into "things" in order to bring them within the realm of discussion. Thus, as Bergson has indicated, our life itself, the most mobile of existences, takes on a kind of rigidity when symbolized by a word and one might say that the whole process of naming things and processes involves freezing time into a solid mass. This distortion of reality ought not to lead to a Bergsonian disparagement of reason. That kind of superstition which consists in confusing symbols with what they symbolize need not drive us to denying the power of the human intellect to grasp all of that part of the world which is knowable. On the contrary, as soon as one knows that one is attributing the characteristics of one's symbolism to the things which are being symbolized, one has simply to retreat and to correct one's thinking. But it is undeniable that what Bacon called the "Idols of the Forum" have had a great influence over philosophy and one may hazard the guess that in the field which interests us here have helped produce the notion that since every noun must preserve its meaning throughout a discussion, so the thing which the noun names must also remain stationary.

Consequently when one uses such terms as "Beauty", "Value", "Goodness", and the like, one insists and one cannot help insisting that they retain an identity of meaning throughout the argument in which they appear. But that does not imply that they must also retain an identity of meaning throughout real history and that what was beauty for Plato must also be beauty for Croce or that what was beauty for Delacroix must also be beauty for Hokusai. On the contrary, one might imagine that if a value really counts for something in the life of an individual or a society, it would change as that individual changed and it would vary with the needs of the society. Thus if we define "beauty" as the value which people find in works of art, it would not be strange that different people would find values which would differ among themselves and that all of them would call the value in question "beauty".



FIG. 1. — INGRES. — Odalisque. — Louvre, Paris.

But regardless of what the value is called, we know that works of art have been cherished for different reasons by different people and at different times. There are two conclusions to be drawn from this historical fact: first, that one group was right and all the others wrong; or, second, that aesthetic values and works of art change from age to age.

The former alternative is the one chosen by most writers on this ticklish subject. Some have been known even to propose that the fundamental aesthetic value lies hidden in a world of its own to be revealed to mankind in progressive stages. This is a kind of Joachinism, a theory of progressive revelation. The trouble with it is that it assumes the existence of something which by its very nature cannot be discovered even though it exists, which puts it in a class with Kant's unknowable things-in-themselves. As every elementary student of philosophy knows, the unknowable must be excluded from human conversation, for if one says anything about it, it ceases to be unknowable. We can only know Beauty when it appears and, that being the case, the expression "new forms of beauty are revealed to mankind throughout human history" simply means that Beauty changes. That such an interpretation is not entirely unsympathetic even to artists is seen by the writings of Delacroix.

The latter alternative then is the one which we are forced to accept regardless of its consequences for our habitual modes of thought. What justification can we give for it?

To begin with we have the observation which has been made over and over

again that no work of art ever retains a high value for a very long period of years. There is no need to dwell upon this platitude; studies in the fortunes of writers and their works have proved it abundantly. We may conclude that the XVIII century critics of Shakespeare were wrong or we may conclude that Shakespeare lost his value in the XVIII century. We may conclude that people who admired Raphael more than Giotto were mistaken, or we may conclude that Giotto only regained value in the late XIX century and lost it during the so-called baroque period. This means that aesthetic values actually come and go and are not eternal.

In the second place, we may observe that even when two men admire a work of art, they may admire it for different reasons. Thus in studying the fortunes of the *Mona Lisa*, one notes that Vasari admired the picture as a careful imitation of nature whereas Théophile Gautier and Walter Pater admired it as a symbol of enigmatic womanhood<sup>1</sup>. Here we find a difference in principles of evaluation at different times. But we can find similar differences at the same time. Thus Proudhon says of Courbet's *Baigneuse* (fig. 3) : "Oui, la voilà, la voilà bien cette bourgeoisie charnue et cossue, déformée par la graisse et le luxe; en qui la mollesse et la masse étouffent l'idéal, et prédestinée à mourir de poltronnerie, quand ce n'est pas de gras fondu; la voilà telle que sa sottise, son égoïsme et sa cuisine nous la font"<sup>2</sup>.

Of the same artist's *Demoiselles de la Seine* (fig. 2) Proudhon writes: "Ces deux femmes vivent dans le bien-être . . . ce sont de vraies artistes. Mais l'orgueil, l'adultère, le divorce et le suicide, remplaçant les amours, voltigent autour d'elles et les accompagnent; elles les portent dans leur douaire; c'est pourquoi à la fin, elles paraissent horribles"<sup>3</sup>.

They also appeared horrible to other critics but for reasons which were scarcely those of Proudhon. Thus M. H. Delaborde who did the criticism of the Salon of 1853 for the "Revue des Deux Mondes" wrote: "Quant à certaines toiles où la méthode réaliste est appliquée à des scènes d'un autre ordre, nous ne croyons pas, malgré le bruit qui se fait autour d'elles, que ce soit pour nous un devoir de nous y arrêter et de les décrire. Bien qu'il soit possible peut-être, en y regardant de près, d'y reconnaître quelques traces d'habileté matérielle, quelque promesse de talent énergique, elles sont à tous autres égards si peu conformes aux lois essentielles de l'art que nous ne voulons pas contribuer, même par la juste sévérité de nos critiques, à leur donner une importance qu'en somme elles ne sauraient avoir"<sup>4</sup>.

To contemporary readers both of these comments will seem beside the point; we are not likely to read into every painting a social message or to demand conformity to certain *lois essentielles de l'art*, especially if those laws are said to be observed in

1. See the author's *The Mona Lisa in the History of Taste*, in: "Journal of the History of Ideas", April 1940, Vol. I, no. 2, pp. 207 ff.

2. *Du principe de l'art*, Paris, 1865, p. 287.

3. Ibid.

4. Quoted by EMILE BOUVIER in his *La Bataille réaliste (1844-1857)*, p. 253.



FIG. 2. — G. COURBET. — *Les Demoiselles au bord de la Seine.* — Petit Palais Museum, Paris.

the works of Ary Scheffer or Gérôme. Zola who admired Courbet's paintings as much as Delaborde disliked them nevertheless could not agree with Proudhon that there were to be admired for their social satire. For him they were the expression of a great and powerful temperament and if they had "social significance", it was of no importance. As he said of Proudhon: "*Une toile, pour lui, est un sujet; peignez-la en rouge ou en vert, que lui importe! Il le dit, il ne s'entend en rien à la peinture, et raisonne tranquillement sur les idées. Il commente, il force le tableau à signifier quelque chose; de la forme, pas un mot*"<sup>5</sup>. Neither Zola nor Proudhon would be considered by us as aesthetic guides. But neither was without influence in his time and, regardless of influence, both were men whose opinions were worth

5. *Mes Haines*, p. 30.

examining. Each represented a certain section of XIX century thought: Proudhon roughly can be grouped with men who continued a tradition which goes back to Plato and which reappeared in Tolstoy, the tradition that all works of art should contribute to the betterment of human morality; Zola with the later "romantic" group for whom all works of art were "expressions" of personality.

One may argue with the principles which guided these men to their interpretation of pictures; but one cannot deny that they were each looking for something special and peculiar in a given picture which when found was evidence of aesthetic value. Thus one may deny that a picture can in fact either better men morally or express a personality, if one chooses; but one cannot deny that Proudhon and Zola thought they found what they were looking for in the pictures of Courbet and that what they found contributed to the excellence, in fact constituted the excellence of the pictures in question. The only just conclusion, it appears to the author of this paper, is that they each saw something different in a given picture and valued it for different reasons.

If now one begins to object that they had no right to find what they actually did find in these pictures, one should first stop to examine the nature of all seeing. It should not be forgotten after all that, aside from so-called pure sensation, all seeing contains interpretation and that interpretation is oriented by a man's total education. Two men whose psychological makeup is exactly the same and whose education in the broadest sense of the word is exactly the same, will no doubt see the same thing in pictures as in other visual objects. But such cases are extremely rare. It is true that when two critics live at the same time and have absorbed from sources whose nature need no inquiry here the same principles of interpretation, they will be likely to agree about the character and value of what they see. The following two critical paragraphs written about Ingres's *Odalisque* (fig. 1) are a case in point:

*"Les personnes qui ne connaîtront le tableau de l'Odalisque que par la gravure que nous mettons sous leurs yeux auront peine à croire qu'il soit aussi défectueux que nous le donnons à penser. En effet, la pose a de l'élégance; les formes, tout incorrectes qu'elles sont, présentent des contours coulants et assez gracieux. Si le premier aspect attire peu, du moins il n'a rien qui choque; on peut y trouver même un certain charme; mais, après un moment d'attention, on voit qu'il n'y a dans cette figure ni os, ni muscles, ni sang, ni vie, ni relief, rien enfin de ce qui constitue l'imitation".*

*"Arrêté malgré moi, plus de deux minutes, devant l'Odalisque de M. Ingres, je regrettai de voir ce jeune artiste se donner beaucoup de peine pour gâter un beau talent. En effet, cette femme, vue par le dos, est faible de dessin, puisque les bras sont d'une maigreur choquante; de coloris, puisqu'elle ne présente qu'une teinte uniforme, où aucune des parties du torse s'est accusée; d'expression, puisque ses traits, d'ailleurs assez bien proportionnés, ne révèlent aucune pensée, ne donnent l'indice*

*d'aucun sentiment . . .”<sup>6</sup>.*

Both Landon and Kératry were men who accepted the Aristotelian dictum that art must be an “imitation of nature” and like most classical critics they somewhat inconsistently believed that not all natural objects were worth imitating. They were not thus “naturalists” in the sense that Courbet was a naturalist. Thus when they maintain that the arms of Ingres’s *Odalisque* are too thin, they mean probably that they are thinner than the taste of the time demands. And in fact, in spite of certain resemblances between the *Odalisque* and the nudes of Canova, one can see in the latter that Canova preferred to represent women whose limbs were more fully clothed in flesh. It is scarcely a matter for debate whether either of these critics were aware of the difficulties in their theory; even Leonardo, one of the most self-conscious of thinkers, could maintain that the painter should imitate nature, that only some things in nature were worth imitating and that certain natural objects should be represented only in certain ways. One applied one’s aesthetic principles to the selection and arrangement of the model and then tried to imitate it.

In our own time such criteria of pictorial excellence would seem somewhat naive to say the least. Yet the *Odalisque* has seldom lacked admirers. Walter Pach, for instance, who has done so much to make contemporary painting more intelligible to the public is, as everyone who has read his interesting book on Ingres knows, a great admirer of this painting, but the reasons which he gives are entirely different from those which were given by the critics of 1819. He on the contrary praises the picture for its “infinite grace”, the “mysterious, effortless undulation”, of the forms, and above all for “the creation of a space, enclosed by the frame, wherein solids appear . . . only to bring about new harmonies with each new change they make in the composition of those solids”<sup>7</sup>. It has required almost a century to introduce into aesthetic criticism the fundamental criteria which Mr. Pach makes use of. One would be foolhardy to say that such an evaluation would have been impossible in 1819, but one could certainly maintain with little fear of contradiction that it would have been most unlikely.

Why not conclude from these inadequate but striking examples, that the aesthetic values are not simply absorbed from the material object, so much paint and color and line and mass, but, as is the case with all observation, are looked for. One’s gaze is oriented by certain principles of which one is not usually aware. The fact that one is not aware of them does not mean that they are mysterious to the historian of taste. On the contrary, such an historian can by comparing the various critical comments which writers have produced see what principles have guided them in their search. These principles turn out to be a whole complex of ideas which a critic

6. LANDON AND KÉRATRY respectively, cited by LAGENEVAIS, *Peintres et Sculpteurs Modernes*, I, M. Ingres, “Rev. des Deux-Mondes”, XVI, 1846, pp. 524-525. I owe these passages to my colleague, Dr. C. E. GAUSS.

7. WALTER PACH, *Ingres*, 1939, p. 49.

absorbs, unconsciously often, from reading, discussions with contemporaries, lectures given by teachers, and the like. They are the principles of approbation, not the causes of liking. One never liked anything the better by knowing that it was dietetically wholesome or moral edifying. Quite the contrary, such knowledge has often been sufficient to turn one away in disgust from the objects so labelled. In fact, it seems doubtful whether we really know very much about exactly why people like the things they like, but we do know a certain amount about their principles of approbation. The distinction between liking and approbation is made for purposes of conversation. It would be folly to pretend that an observer of a painting sees with two sets of eyes. The very act of seeing unifies the field of vision. And what is even more interesting, ideas which are normally set forth in long and involved sentences can be presented in a single visual object in art. Thus the emblems of Alciati, like Shakespeare's metaphors, present visually and hence concretely what would require a whole essay to express in words. But the same would be true about almost any of Daumier's paintings — I am not referring to the caricatures. Again, the public which objected fiercely to Courbet's *Stone Crushers* were perhaps blinded to its "aesthetic" excellence, but to have eliminated its "social message" was as difficult for them as to read that message back into the picture is difficult for us.

Naturally one cannot avoid the question of who is right in all this. Are we to read things into paintings which the painter did not intend or are we to adopt an attitude which we believe to be "objective" and either try to recapture the artist's attitude towards his work or divest the painting of everything except its purely sensory content? The former of these alternatives is impossible. We are what we are and even if we pretend to be V century Greeks or Frenchmen of the '40's, we are just indulging in a rather pathetic fancy-dress. A V century Greek did not have to go through a course of study to fit into his time; he actually was a V century Greek. A member of the Bourgeois Monarchy was born into it, spoke the language, saw the sights, fought the battles, and ate the food — material and spiritual — of his time. No matter how great the effort or how clever the disguise, the effort will have to be made and the disguise is not reality. As for the second alternative, we can divest any experience, if we will, of any of its content, but the deeper question arises of why we should. A scientist has to impoverish his experiences in order to reach those fundamental abstractions which alone make his generalizations possible. Thus it would have been silly for Newton to think about the mythological symbolism of the planets or their astrological significance when computing their orbits. And it is equally unnecessary for a biologist to think about the beauty of the animals he studies or even of their usefulness to man in agriculture or the hunt. To understand a work of art entirely requires an analysis of its composition, and I have no intention of deprecating the practice when one is seeking to understand what one has before him. But no artist can be said in all honesty to be producing

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material for scientists to investigate. Shakespeare did not create his astounding metaphors for rhetoricians to study but for his public to hear and to be astounded by. We have not the ears of Elizabethans and we cannot without fooling ourselves acquire them. But we do have ears and if Shakespeare is to mean anything to us, he must make his meaning clear to us as men of our own time. But that meaning is something different from the ideas and explanations contained in learned footnotes. Consequently every reading of a book is a re-creation of it, every picture's observation is a similar act of re-creation.



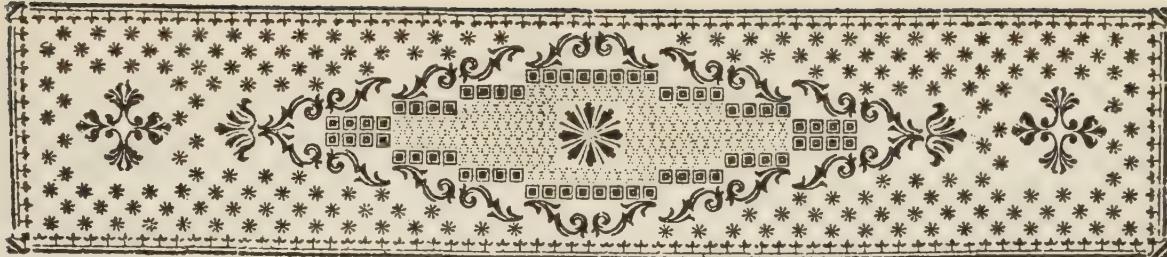
FIG. 3. — G. COURBET. — *Baigneuse*. — The Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan.

It is therefore possible for works of art to die and to be resurrected. It is possible for them to change their meaning with successive generations. In America we have seen dramatic tracts turn into farces and European man has seen the *Aeneid* turn into a book of magic. This sort of history is inevitable, since a book which is not read, a picture which no one sees, music which no one hears are at best asleep, if not dead, and reading, looking, hearing are not passive receptions of stimuli from an external world but are active interpretations of those stimuli. Thus the pathos of the eternal is really irrelevant to the aesthetic issue. For even if the word "eternal" is used in the sense of "that which is beyond time", that which is dateless, the eternal is no better than the temporal. If it is used in the sense of the "everlasting", then no work of art can be found which is everlasting, and no quality is more intense because of its duration. It is, to be sure, possible to hold before one's mind when one is looking at a picture the fact that others whose opinion one respects have admired it; it is also possible to see in the picture the corroboration of such peoples'

theories of aesthetic value; but why should that attitude, which substitutes the taste of others for one's own, be the sole legitimate one to take? One can hear Haydn in Beethoven, see David in Ingres, read Homer in Vergil. One thus acquires a sense of tradition which is of great interest and throws a certain light on what happens in the history of the various arts. It may illuminate the everlasting habit of imitation or influence and thus convince people that complete originality is impossible. But do we listen to music in order to be convinced that no composer is independent of his predecessors or to hear notes and melodies and harmonies? Does one look at El Greco in order to see how Cretan Byzantine painting became wedded to Venetian painting or to see a picture? If the latter, then it must be granted that no one ever saw a picture in exactly the same way as anyone else and, what is more, no one can be expected to. The person who for the first time becomes enamored of Cézanne is none the happier for knowing that other people have been enamored of him earlier in modern history. He has simply discovered a fact in the history of his taste. Knowing that he belongs to an aesthetic group may enhance his pleasure or it may not, but to see from then on in a canvas of Cézanne not merely what he saw before but also an object admired by others more distinguished than he, is to see something different from what he saw before.

This paper then would urge readers frankly to relocate works of art in the temporal order, to appreciate to the full the implications of this program, to substitute for the supposed eternal values, values which come into being and disappear with the men and women who contribute to their birth. It is a plea for the recognition of the multivalence of works of art, for the rejection of the notion of a single aesthetic value. This will inevitably entail a kind of aesthetic relativism, an integration of aesthetic values into a larger system of relations whose boundaries cannot be clearly and finally fixed. To do this will certainly require a redefinition of the arts not on the basis of the materials they use, paint, stone, words, sounds, and so on, but on the basis of the purposes which they have served and can be made to serve. Only thus can one intelligibly interpret the rise and fall of certain artists and their works, certain "styles" and "genres". But if works of art inhabit a country without history, it is first of all impossible to explain how they occasionally descend into this land of change and multiplicity and why at certain times all the race of seeing men are blind to their beauty. There was a time when physicists also were satisfied to see an immovable pattern behind the phenomena of dynamics; in Aristotle movement was a blemish on the unmoving face of the natural order. Few scientists would now take that attitude, for they have become accustomed to integrate change and multiplicity into the order of nature. Students of the arts might make a similar shift and see changes in evaluations not as symptoms of frivolity or as down-right error, but as re-creations of the legacy which the past has left them.

GEORGE BOAS



# MEXICAN COLONIAL PAINTINGS IN DAVENPORT

NONE of the collections of art, public or private, in the United States, is as rich in Mexican Colonial paintings as The Davenport Municipal Art Gallery. Not even the well known Lamborn Collection at the Philadelphia Museum of Art compares with it. Its origin is due to C. A. Ficke, who in 1925 made a gift to Davenport of three hundred and thirty paintings, on the condition that a public gallery of art should be established in a building of its own. The Legislature of Iowa passed a law allowing the cities of the State to establish and support Art Galleries. The Armory building was donated for the purpose, funds were assigned for its maintenance and in October of the same year, the Gallery was opened to the public and a catalogue of the collection was issued<sup>1</sup>.

It was at the Hispanic Foundation of the Library of Congress that my good friend Robert C. Smith showed me the catalogue of the Davenport Gallery. How could it be true that such marvels existed there, especially works by the Echaves, Juárez and Arteaga? At first, I could not help, I must confess, suspecting them to be falsifications with apochryphal signatures<sup>2</sup>.

1. *The Davenport Municipal Art Gallery, catalog of 334 paintings, the gift of C. A. Ficke, 1925.*

2. I want to express here my gratitude to Dr. Robert C. Smith, for his information about these paintings, and to Miss Elizabeth Moeller, Director of the Davenport Municipal Art Gallery, who was kind enough to help me in the study of the paintings and to provide the photographs reproduced in this article.



FIG. 1. — SEBASTIAN DE ARTEAGA (?). — Adoration of the Magi, painting. — The Davenport Municipal Art Gallery.  
Courtesy of the Davenport Municipal Art Gallery.

I welcomed Dr. Smith's suggestion to go and see them; undoubtedly, it would be extraordinary to find so many Mexican paintings of the first rank in a North American collection. In 1940 I had seen the Lamborn Collection in Philadelphia, and had been entirely disappointed. But since one has to kill the worm of curiosity — if one is interested in any special field of culture — I decided to take a chance on the new and intriguing proposition and went to Chicago since the only thing I knew then about Davenport was that it was at three hours' distance by railroad from there. I spent less than a day in Davenport and returned, sorry to leave so soon, as I would have liked to have given more time to the charming town and to the paintings. Davenport is indeed so calm that it was like an oasis for my broken nerves. When Latin Americans hear about the United States, they think of it as a feverish country where everybody walks fast and is afraid of colliding with others; this may be true in the big cities, but in the smaller ones, such as Davenport, one can enjoy perhaps a greater calm than in the "pueblos" of Mexico.

In what concerns the paintings which could hardly be studied within so short a



FIG. 2.—BALTASAR DE ECHAVE Y RIOJA.—Adoration of the Magi, painting, 1659.—The Davenport Municipal Art Gallery.  
*Courtesy of the Davenport Municipal Art Gallery.*

time,—of the three hundred and thirty-four entries contained in the catalogue of the Davenport Municipal Art Gallery, fifty-seven refer to Spanish Colonial paintings of Mexico, that is to say, a little more than a sixth of the whole. Half of them are worth studying, which is a high percentage, since in many cases when paintings are not false they are almost valueless.

Eight paintings appear to us as being of prime importance, ten might be classified as of secondary, and the other six are of a lesser interest.

It is impossible for me to arrive at definitive conclusions concerning all of these works. Perhaps the occasion will arise for me or some other scholar to study them thoroughly. In the meantime I only want to express here my observations on the most important pictures, which later on can be rectified in the presence of new data.

The two most valuable pictures of this group of Spanish Colonial paintings from Mexico have a common theme: "The Adoration of the Magi" (figs. 1-2). The

better and larger one was hanging, when I saw it, at the Public Library. It is attributed to José Juárez in the catalogue, but it has no signature. The other one is attributed to Baltasar de Echave, and shows a signature with this name and the date: 1659 (fig. 2). I must confess that my first impression — in accordance with my memory and the catalogue — was that both of them belonged to the unequalled brush of José Juárez. Now, I think differently. The smaller painting I am sure is authentic, the signature does not seem to be at all apocryphal: it is indeed a painting by Baltasar de Echave y Rioja, magnificent, fresh and graceful, one of his early works. If we compare it with his *Entombment of Christ*, its qualities and defects are similar. The folds of the mantles, minute and full of mannerisms, confirm the signature.

Observing the large painting, its folds, its clear and solemn rhythmical composition, its perfect equilibrium and symmetry, its handling, less effective and contrasted than that of José Juárez, I began to have doubts that this painting was by him: comparing it with the finest painting in our own collection at the Galleries of San Carlos in Mexico City, I found nothing that would be more like it than the famous *Marriage of the Virgin* by Sebastián de Arteaga (fig. 3). There is the same serenity, the same eurhythm, and the same luxurious overflowing of rich cloths, sumptuously handled in folds and corrugations, in tints and qualities.



FIG. 3.—SEBASTIAN DE ARTEAGA.—*Marriage of the Virgin*, painting.—Galleries of San Carlos, Mexico.



FIG. 4. — ANONYMOUS. — Descent from the Cross, painting. — The Davenport Municipal Art Gallery. Courtesy of the Davenport Municipal Art Gallery.

Mexico<sup>4</sup>. Nevertheless, I have revised the whole production of the Flemish artist, as far as it can be done through books, and I find no similarities except in the central

3. *Triumpho Parthenico . . .* Mexico, 1683, fol. 34. — Furthermore COUTO says in his *Diálogo sobre la Historia de la Pintura en México*, 1872, p. 45: "I have heard that in a Convent, I do not remember which, there is an *Adoration of the Magi* by Arteaga, in which one can see his powerful style."

4. I can remember at least the following paintings, copied after or inspired by him: Echave y Rioja: *Triumph of Faith* and *Triumph of Religion*, in the Sacristy of the Cathedral of Puebla. José Juárez: *Scenes from the life of San Salvador de Orta*. Three large paintings, now at the staircase of the Ex-Academy of San Carlos, Mexico. Pedro Ramírez: *Jesus consoled by the angels*, at the parochial Church of San Miguel, Mexico. (In this picture Ruben's influence is very strong). José de Ibarra: *Jesus in the house of the Pharisee*, Galleries of San Carlos, Mexico. Recently, JUSTINO-FERNÁNDEZ has identified the source of *The Holy Family*, by José Juárez, at the Academy of Puebla. It was partially but directly taken from an early work of Rubens with the same subject. See: "Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas", U.N. no. 10, 1943.

I wish to recall here what Sigüenza y Góngora said in his *Triumpho Parthenico*<sup>3</sup>, when referring to Arteaga: "The naturalness in the symmetry of the parts and the natural air of the cloths, was a pleasure to the eye in the polished artifice of the consummate Arteaga". This is not the occasion to renew the discussion on Arteaga and his two extremes: *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas* and the *Marriage of the Virgin*, but when I looked at the paintings the words of Sigüenza appeared to me as being most adequate.

At first sight, the picture looks like a copy after Rubens. It is well known that this master was copied or imitated during the XVII and XVIII centuries in



FIG. 5.—BALTAZAR DE ECHAVE (?).—Saint Peter, painting.—The Davenport Municipal Art Gallery. Courtesy of the Davenport Municipal Art Gallery.

Joseph. The clothing is less skilfully arranged and the handling stronger and more contrasted. The *Adoration* by José Juárez derives from this last: the artist here has restored the equilibrium of the composition, with symmetrical masses on both sides of the central group; but these masses are reversed: the Magi are now to the right

5. *La Peinture au Musée Ancien de Bruxelles* par FIERENS-GEVAERT, Brussels and Paris, 1923 (pl. LXXIV: Pierre Paul Rubens, *Adoration des Mages*).

6. Lately reproduced in the "Gazette des Beaux-Arts", 1943, vol. XXIII, p. 167.

group with *The Adoration*, in the Brussels Museum which resembles the one by Echave Orio<sup>5</sup>. But Rubens is much more disordered and exotic. He does not have that clearness of composition which leaves a central group isolated and balanced with two matching symmetrical masses on both sides. It may be said that Arteaga has followed the Flemish artist in details of sumptuousness and richness, but his composition is less baroque and still classic.

Comparing these two *Adorations* with the other one that hangs in the Galleries of San Carlos signed by José Juárez<sup>6</sup>, dated 1665, there appear many interesting observations that corroborate our hypothesis. From the *Adoration* that I attribute to Arteaga (fig. 1) derives, with small changes, the one which is signed by Echave y Rioja in 1659 (fig. 2). The latter is less serene and more baroque, its unbalanced composition makes one suspect that the artist did not have enough space to complete it and found only room enough for Saint

and the Virgin to the left. Some whole figures are copied, as the Magi to the right, but the copy is even superior to the model: the flesh is better treated, the clothing is more soft. The composition is vertical instead of being horizontal. There are details reminiscent of Rubens, but the work of Juárez is drier and more temperate, and his design is so precise that it approaches hardness.

After these two *Adorations* there follows in importance, as far as I can judge, a small *Descent of the Cross* (fig. 4), attributed in the catalogue to Sebastián de Arteaga. In the corner on the lower right appear the heads of the donors, as though they were coming out of the earth or, rather, as if they had been added afterwards. It is true that the picture presents the sombre coloring, the vigorous chiaroscuro and the strong modeling of the anatomies which are characteristic of the Sevillian in his second manner, but the composition is so disintegrated, the attitudes so forced and the technique on the whole so different, that though at first it seemed to be an Arteaga, I am inclined now to change my opinion. After an examination of Spanish painters of this time, I find that there are here far more similarities with Carreño. The manner of designing the noses, sometimes centering them with only a line, and the faces, half in light and half in shadow, can be frequently seen in the work of Arteaga. But the two portraits of the donors are still more like Carreño; that of the Lady, with a sensual



FIG. 6.—BALTAZAR DE ECHAVE (?).—Saint Paul, painting.—The Davenport Municipal Art Gallery. Courtesy of the Davenport Municipal Art Gallery.

face, full of life, recalls the portrait of Doña Isabel Díaz<sup>7</sup>.

The two paintings with the Apostles *Saint Peter* (fig. 5), and *Saint Paul* (fig. 6), are catalogued as being by Echave. It is not explained which Echave they are supposed to have been painted by, but I assume they mean Echave Orio, called "El Viejo" (The elder), the only one that was considered at the time the Gallery was founded. There is no doubt that the pictures somewhat recall the great Basque painter: his way of painting feet is unmistakable. But the heads are different; that of Saint Peter looks very much like those of the small Apostles of Echave Ibía. So I believe that one could venture to aver the opinion that the two pictures come from the studio of Echave Orio, and that in their manufacture both master and disciples intervened. We find that the same case is true concerning the portraits of the first Archbishops of Mexico which, with Echave's signature, are preserved in the treasure of our Cathedral.

There appears in the catalogue a *Nativity of the Virgin* attributed to Echave, which might possibly be by his brush. There is also listed a *Santa Teresa* with other figures, attributed to Luis Juárez. It is known that the work of this last is so homogeneous that there can scarcely be any doubt about his paintings.

A small picture, though not of great importance, has the charms and ingenuousness of the primitives: it represents *The Virgin of the Rosary* with Saint Dominic and Saint Katherine on either side. It is a small metal plate; the throne of the Virgin, in the style of the baroque architecture of the XVII century, establishes the date of the painting.

There is a *Madona* painted with a skill and gracefulness and belonging to the early XIX century which without great effort may be attributed to Ximeno<sup>8</sup>.

Among the list of pictures of secondary importance we find the signatures of Vallejo, Villalpando, Cabrera, Morlete Ruiz and Antonio Torres; one perhaps could be attributed to Correa. There are others of inferior quality by Andrés Islas, Carlos Clemente López and José Mota. It must be noted that among the anonymous or doubtful ones there are also some interesting pictures. Let us hope that some day we may have a thorough study of them, but for the present time we take pleasure in pointing out to those interested, the importance of this group of works of art.

MANUEL TOUSSAINT

7. VERJANO ESCOBAR, Carreño, pl. XXIII.

8. See article by JUSTINO FERNÁNDEZ Tiepolo, Mengs and Don Rafael Ximeno y Planes in: "Gazette des Beaux-Arts", 1943, vol. XXIII, pp. 345 & sq. Also for general information see: MANUEL ROMERO DE TERREROS, MARQUÉS DE SAN FRANCISCO, *The Principal Painters of New Spain*, in: "Gazette des Beaux-Arts", 1943, vol. XXIII, pp. 161 & sq.



# THE ART OF THE NORTHWEST COAST AT THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

**T**HREE is in New York a magic place where all the dreams of childhood hold a rendezvous, where century old tree trunks sing or speak, where indefinable objects lie in wait for the visitor with an anxious stare; where animals of superhuman gentleness press their uplifted little paws, clasped in prayer for the privilege of constructing for the chosen one the palace of the beaver, of guiding him into the realm of the seals, or of teaching him, with a mystic kiss, the language of the frog and king-fisher. This region, to which disused but singularly effective museographic methods grant the supplementary prestige of the *clair-obscur* of caves and of the crumbling heap of lost treasure, can be visited daily from ten to five o'clock at the American Museum of Natural History, New York. It is the vast gallery on the ground floor (fig. 1) devoted to Indians of the Northwest Coast which extends from Alaska to British Columbia.

Certainly the time is not far distant when the collections of the Northwest Coast will move from anthropological museums to take their place in art museums among the arts of Egypt, Persia and the Middle Ages. For this art is not unequal to those great ones and unlike them, it has displayed, during the century and a half of its known development, a prodigious diversity and apparently inexhaustible power of renewal. This was suddenly and so completely extinguished between 1910 and 1920 that today, aside from the ancient totem poles spared by museums, one can find along the entire coast nothing more than the misshapen figurines roughly

carved to be sold to tourists for a few cents.

Nevertheless, that century and a half witnessed the birth and flourishing of not one but ten different forms of art: from the hand-twined blankets of the Chilkat, still unknown at the beginning of the XIX century and at a single stroke attaining the highest perfection of textile technique with the limited means of sharp yellow extracted from moss, black from cedar bark and the coppery blue of mineral oxides; up to the exquisite slate sculptures, glossy like black obsidian and showing the flamboyant decadence (at the stage of the knick-knack) of an art suddenly in possession of steel implements which in turn destroy it; in passing through the wild mode — which was to last only some years — of the Tlingit dance headdresses blazoned with sculptural motifs and inlaid with mother of pearl, covered with fur or the white down of wild birds and from which a hundred pelts of ermine descend in cascades like curls. This incessant renovation, this sureness which in no matter what direction guarantees definite and overwhelming success, this scorn of the way a single time frequented, this ceaseless driving toward new feats which infallibly ends in dazzling results — to know this our civilization had to await the exceptional destiny of a Picasso. It is not futile to emphasize that the daring ventures of a single man which have left us breathless for thirty years, were known and practiced during one hundred and fifty years by an entirely indigenous culture; indeed we have no reason to doubt that this multiform art has been developed according to the same rhythm



FIG. 1. — GENERAL VIEW OF THE GALLERY DEVOTED TO ALASKA AND BRITISH COLUMBIA.  
American Museum of Natural History, New York.

since its remotest origin of which we are ignorant. Some objects of stone excavated in Alaska show that this powerful art, easily recognized in even its archaic forms, has probably been in its present location since an ancient epoch — this term being given the wholly relative sense which accompanies it when applied to American archaeology.

However this may be, at the end of the XIX century there still existed a continuous chain of villages along the border and in the islands from the Gulf of Alaska to the south of Vancouver. At the most flourishing period the tribes of the Northwest Coast totalled one hundred to one hundred and fifty

thousand souls, a derisive total when one ponders the intensity of expression and decisive lessons of an art wholly elaborated in this far province of the new world by a population whose density varied, according to the section, from 0.1 to 0.6 inhabitants per square kilometer<sup>1</sup>. To the north were the Tlingit to whom we owe the most pure sculpture and most precious ornaments (figs. 2 and 3); toward the south, the Haida — brutal and powerful sculptors (fig. 4); next the more academic Tsimshian; then the Kwakiutl who, in creating their dance masks allowed themselves the most sumptuous fancies of forms and colours (figs. 5 and 6); the Bella Coola in whose palette cobalt blue predominates; the Nootka of a more timorous realism; finally, at the extreme south, the Chinook and

<sup>1</sup>. I am referring here to the evaluations given by A. L. KROEGER in: *Cultural and Natural Areas of Native North America*, Berkeley, Univ. of Cal. Press, 1939.



FIG. 2.—TLINGIT.—Carved figure of Grave Guard, taken from Grave House of a doctor of the "Kut-Kow-ee" family of the Guru-nah-Ho-Qwah.—American Museum of Natural History.



FIG. 3.—TLINGIT.—Carved figure of doctors guard or spirit, taken from the Grave House of a doctor of the Kar-Qwan-Ton family of the Chilkart Qwan.—American Museum of Natural History.

Salish among whom the last rays of northern inspiration seem to begin to vanish<sup>2</sup>.

Whence come these groups, often different in speech but in their art, in spite of local variations

2. The more important works on the northwest coast are: FRANZ BOAS, *The Social Organization and Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians*, in: Report of the U. S. National Museum for 1895; *Tsimshian Mythology*, 31st Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1916; J. R. SWANTON, *Contributions to the*

*Ethnology of the Haida*, American Museum of Natural History, Memoirs, VIII, 1915; *Social Condition, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians*, 26th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1908, and the same authors' contributions to the works and publications of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition.

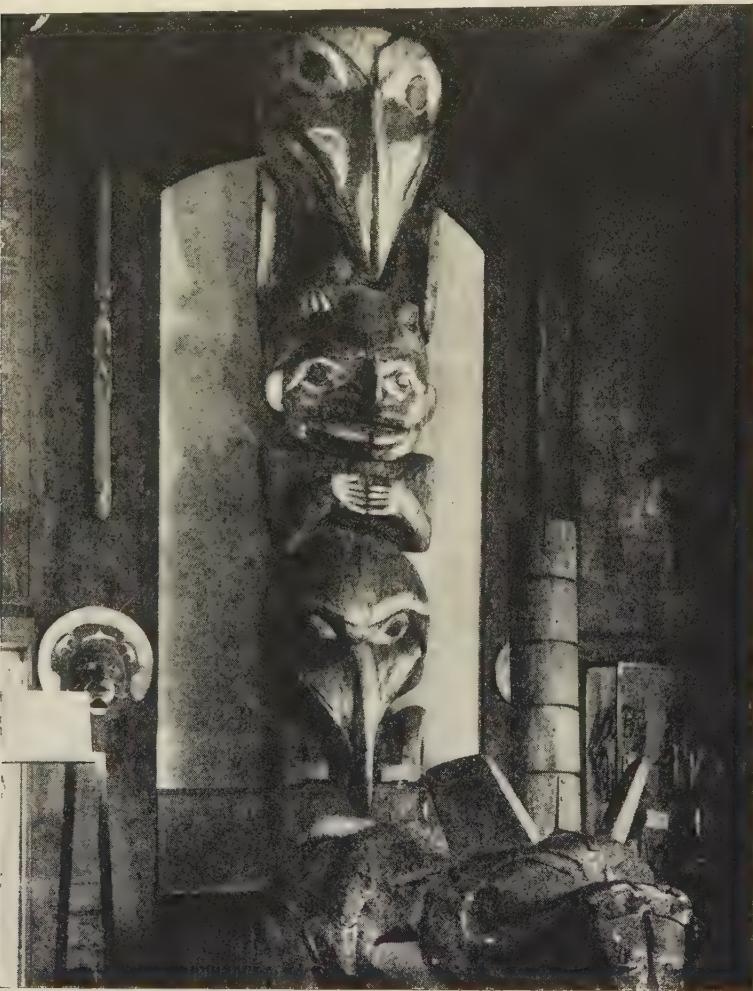


FIG. 4. — HAIDA. — Grave-post.— American Museum of Natural History.

of style and inequality of talent, attesting a common origin? My master, Marcel Mauss, chose to suggest that everything in the art and customs of the Northwest evoked for him a mysterious and very primitive China<sup>3</sup>. In truth, it is impossible when confronting the decorations of the Chilkat blankets and the Tlingit and Haida chests not to evoke the ocellated bronzes of the first millennium of archaic China. The great American linguist Sapir died convinced that the Na Dené, one of the most important linguistic families of the Coast, should be connected with Sino-Tibetan. Such imperious suggestions, however, meet with difficulty in a demonstration. Anthropologically the natives

3. In his *Huxley Memorial Lecture* entitled: "Une nouvelle catégorie: celle de Personnalité" (1938).

of Alaska and British Columbia are American Indians, doubtless members, as are all Indians of the two Americas, of a great Asiatic family, but separated for a sufficient number of millenium to justify the presence of specific characteristics totally absent in modern mongolians: for instance, the predominance of the blood group O, which, overwhelming and unequaled in any other part of the world, manifests itself from the Salish of the Northwest Coast to the natives of the Brazilian forest<sup>4</sup>.

Another hypothesis, often assumed since Cook reached the coast of Alaska by crossing the Pacific from the southern seas, is that of Polynesian affinities, more particularly with New Zealand. Like the Maori, the natives of the Northwest Coast built rectangular houses of planks, also they wove fringed blankets in a form common to the two regions, in both groups wooden sculpture reached an exceptional development, especially characterized by high posts ornamented with superposed figures and similarly erected outside the houses. Finally, as definite proof of the parentage,

4. The predominance of the blood group O among the Salish was established by GATES AND DARBY, *Blood Groups and Physiognomy of British Columbia Coastal Indians*, "Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland", vol. 64, 1934. Among the Brazilian Indians, Ribeiro and Berardinelli found the percentage, sceptically received at first, of 100% for the group O for a group of Tupi Indians. This result was, however, entirely confirmed by DR. J. A. VELLARD and myself during our expedition of 1938 among the Nambikuara Indians. North American anthropologists have found among different stocks of North and Central American Indians, percentages averaging from 60 to almost 90 per cent. One can hardly doubt that pure American Indians, either from North or South, belonged entirely to the O group. There is not a single other instance of a similar, or even approached, predominance of one blood group elsewhere in the world.

there was the alleged discovery among the tribes of the Northwest of a highly specialized club, the New Zealand *patu mere* so characteristic in form and decoration that its independent invention in two distinct points of the earth seems totally inconceivable. Thus the origin of the *patu mere* was soon to become the "mystery story" of American archaeology, and the anthropologists applied themselves to each example with a subtlety worthy of Sherlock Holmes. To begin with it was easily demonstrated

that almost all specimens collected in America could have been brought during the XVIII and XIX centuries by travellers who came from the southern waters as Cook did. The specimens from the Northwest Coast seem the more doubtful since they were in possession of the same tribes who, at the end of the XVIII century showed Cook silver spoons of Spanish style, come, one asks, from whence into this land until then unknown. But one example at least resists all the tentative explanations: it was discovered by Tschudi in a pre-Incasic tomb in Peru, with no doubt as to its Maori origin and no question of the impossibility of its surreptitious introduction by a traveler subsequent to the XVI century. From this one why not admit the authenticity of all others, notably those of British Columbia? Alas, the authenticity of the Peruvian example is only too indisputable. The age of the tomb, however inviolate, in which it was found, renders it contemporaneous to the epoch when the Maori had not yet reached New Zealand or at least had just begun to settle there<sup>5</sup>. Even suppose they were already there, from New Zealand to the American shores the distance is five thousand miles! One is truly in the presence of the perfect crime — a crime against science alone; for even the most resolute adversaries of Dr. Paul Rivet's famous thesis of contacts between Polynesia and America at the pre-Colombian era<sup>6</sup>, agree in recognizing the authenticity of the *patu mere* found in America although demonstrating, in the most convincing fashion, that from the point of view of history and geography they ought not to have been able to be there<sup>7</sup>.

If we have set forth the debates of the

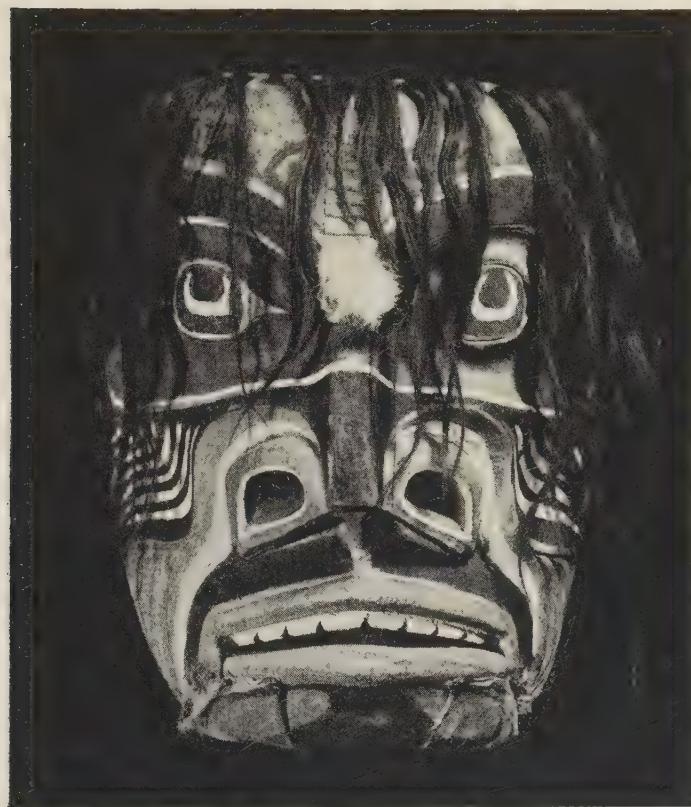


FIG. 5. — KWAKIUTL. — Danse-mask. — American Museum of Natural History.

5. On the excavations of von TSCHUDI, see M. E. RIVERO AND J. D. von TSCHUDI, *Antiguedades Peruanas*, Vienna 1851. Concluding a thorough analysis of the TSCHUDI case, DR. DIXON, a resolute adversary of the Polynesian theory, confesses: "On the basis of the data available we appear to have reached an *impasse*" (italics are the author's). ROLAND B. DIXON, *Contacts with America across the Southern Pacific*, in "The American Aborigines", edited by DIAMOND JENNESS, The University of Toronto Press, 1933, p. 342.

6. DR. PAUL RIVET's theory is well known. It appears in its latest form in his book, *Les Origines de*

*l'Homme Américain*, just published by Les Editions de l'Arbre, Montréal, 1943.

7. After having convincingly established the almost practical impossibility of pre-Colombian contacts between Polynesia and America, DR. DIXON concludes: "When all the many instances are sifted and critically weighed, there remains a very small residue of perhaps two or three facts which renders the acceptance of trans-Pacific contact not only just, but apparently inescapable..." (*loc. cit.* p. 353). The question is, when one reaches such a conclusion, if all the other evidences which were previously dismissed as dubious or equivocal

specialists it is because they are but the expression, on a rational level, of the tragic mystery and stern anxiety which are the most striking characteristics of the art of the Northwest Coast. For the spectators of the initiatory rituals, the dance masks which open suddenly in two shutters to allow one to see a second face, and sometimes a third behind the second, attested the omnipresence of the supernatural and the perpetual life of myth beneath the calm of daily illusions. The primitive message was one of such violence that even today the prophylactic isolation of the vitrine does not prevent its ardent communication. Wander for an hour or so across this room set up with "de vivants piliers". The expression of the poet<sup>8</sup>, through a new and mysterious "correspondance", is the exact translation of the indigenous term designating these sculptured poles which supported the beams of houses; poles which were less things than living beings with "regards familiers" inasmuch as they too, in days of doubt and torment, issued "de confuses paroles" guiding the inhabitant of the house, advising and comforting him and indicating the path from his difficulties. It would be more disturbing, even for us, to recognize them as dead tree trunks than not to hear their stifled murmur; just as, on both sides of some dark visage behind the glass of the vitrine, not to catch

a glimpse of the "Cannibal Raven" clapping its beak like wings, and of the "Master of the Tides" ruling the movement of the waters with a wink of his ingeniously articulated eye.

Indeed most of these masks are naive and ferocious contraptions. A system of cords, pulleys and hinges permits the mouths to deride the terrors of the newly initiated, the eyes to mourn his death and the jaws to devour him. This unique art unites in its figures the contemplative serenity of the statues of Chartres and the Egyptian tombs with the gnashing artifices of Hallowe'en. These two traditions of equal grandeur and parallel authenticity, of which the stands of the amusement parks and the cathedrals today dispute the dismembered shreds, reign here in their primitive and undisturbed unity. This dithyrambic gift of synthesis, the almost monstrous faculty to perceive as similar what all other men have conceived as different undoubtedly constitutes the exceptional feature of the art of British Columbia. Passing from vitrine to vitrine, from object to object, from one corner to another of the same object sometimes, one has the feeling of passing from Egypt to the XII century, from the wooden horses of the merry-go-rounds to the Sassanides, from the Palace of Versailles (with its insolent emphasis on heraldry, crests and nobility and, its almost riotous

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should not be reconsidered in a more favourable light. Probabilities are worthless when they receive no confirmation; but as soon as the fact for which they testify is established on independent grounds, they gain a singularly strong meaning and buttress each other. This does not prevent me from agreeing with Dr. Dixon as to the tremendous difficulties with which we are confronted, "on the basis of the data available", to borrow a useful argument from him, when trying to understand how and when the contact may have taken place, and to evaluate its bearing upon the development of American cultures.

8. Quotations from Baudelaire, even short, cannot be translated without profanation. These come from the sonnet *Correspondances*, the fourth poem of *Spleen et Idéal* in *Les Fleurs du Mal*, with its mysterious Alaskan-like atmosphere.



FIG. 6. — KWAKIUTL. — Danse-mask representing a jelly fish. — American Museum of Natural History.

taste for metaphor and allegory) to the Congo forest. Look closely at the boxes of provisions, carved in bas-relief and set off with black and red. The ornamentation seems purely decorative. A rigid conservatism obeying fundamental rules permits, however, the representation of a bear, a shark, a beaver without any of the limits which elsewhere confine the artist. The animal is represented altogether in full face and in profile, from the back and at the same time from above and from below, from without and from within. A butcher draftsman, by an extraordinary mixture of convention and realism has skinned and boned, even removed the entrails, to construct a new being coincident by all points of its anatomy with the parallelepiped or rectangular surface and the object created is at once a box and an animal — many animals, and a man<sup>9</sup>. The box speaks, it actually guards the treasures entrusted to it in the corner of a house where all proclaim that it is, itself, the inner part of some more enormous animal which one enters by a door which is a gaping jawbone and wherein rustles in a hundred friendly and tragic aspects, a forest of human and non-human symbols. One observes the same transfiguration with the two admirable Tlingit wooden figures reproduced here (figs. 2 and 3). The two personages are literally dressed with animals. The abdomen of one grins like a jawbone while on the patella of the other appear two little moon faces. In a Kwakiutl legend recorded by Franz Boas, the natives tell of the mythologic hero who appears first as a whale, who later approaches the shores as a man disembarking from the whale, which is no longer himself but his canoe. When he meets the local chief and his daughter whom he wishes to marry he presents them at a feast with the whale which has now returned to its animal nature at the end of its third transmutation. Swanton<sup>10</sup> has recorded the Tlingit story of the woman who fled from the bears and arriving at a lake saw a canoe

floating on it. The canoe wore a dance hat and said to her, "run this way into the water." She ran into the water and reached the canoe which went up with her to the sun. The canoe was a grizzly-bear canoe and could understand what was said, and after traveling for a long time it would stop suddenly. "This was because it was hungry and they would then break up a box of grease in front of the bow" to feed it. Would it not be astonishing if these objects which speak, dance and eat should not conserve, even in the prison of the Museum, a little of their vibrating life?

These objects — beings transformed into things, human animals, living boxes — seem as remote as possible from our own conception of art since the time of the Greeks. Yet even here one would err to suppose that a single possibility of the aesthetic life had escaped the prophets and virtuosos of the Northwest Coast. Several of those masks and statues are thoughtful portraits which prove a concern to attain not only physical resemblance but the most subtle spiritual essence of the soul. The sculptor of Alaska and British Columbia is not only the sorcerer who confers upon the supernatural a visible form but also the inspired creator, the interpreter who translates into eternal *chefs d'œuvre* the fugitive emotions of man.

No more profound or sincere homage has been rendered the mission of the artist than that implied by another Tlingit legend which I now give in resumé after the version by Swanton<sup>11</sup>. It is entitled "The Image That Came to Life" and tells the story of a young chief desperately in love with his wife who dies of an illness in spite of the care of the best shamans. The inconsolable prince went from carver to carver begging them to carve a portrait of his wife, but no one could attain a perfect likeness. Finally he met one who said to him: "I have seen your wife a great deal walking along with you. I have never studied her face with the idea that you might want some one to carve it, but I am going to try if you will allow me". The carver began work, finished the statue and when the young chief got inside his house he saw his dead wife sitting there, just as she used to look. Filled with a melancholy joy he asked the carver the price of this work. But the carver, sorry to see this chief mourning for his wife, said: "It is because I felt badly for you that I made it; so don't pay me too much

9. The great FRANZ BOAS, who died a few months ago, has applied the inexhaustible resources of his analytical genius to the interpretation of the labyrinth of themes, rules and conventions of the art of the Northwest Coast. See: FRANZ BOAS, *The Decorative Art of the Indians of the North Pacific coast*, "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History", vol. 9, art. 10, New York, 1897, and the book by the same author: *Primitive Art*, Oslo, 1927.

10. JOHN R. SWANTON, *Tlingit Myths and Texts*, Bulletin 59, Bureau of American Ethnology, 1909: The origin of copper, texa no. 89, p. 254-255.

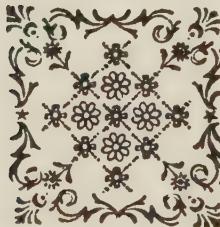
11. loc. cit., pp. 181-182.

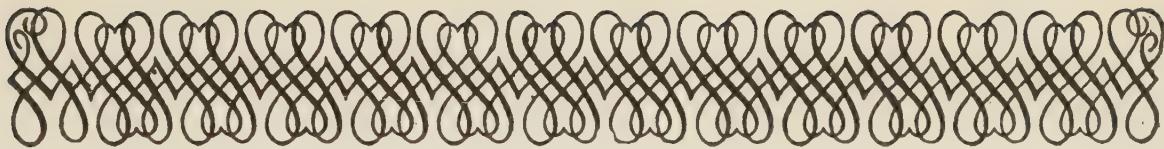
for it". But the chief paid him very well, both in slaves and in goods. The chief had the feeling that his wife had come back to him and treated the image just like her, dressing it in his wife's clothes. One day he had the impression that the statue began to move and from that moment examined it attentively every day, for he thought that at some time it would come to life. But, although the image daily grew more like a human being and was unquestionably living, it could neither move nor speak. Some time later the image gave forth a sound from its chest, like that of crackling wood, and the man knew that it was ill. When he had it removed from its accustomed place he found a small red-cedar tree growing there on the top of the flooring. He left it until it grew to be very large, and it is because of this that cedars on the Queen Charlotte Islands are so good. When people there find a good tree they say, "This looks like the baby of the chief's

wife". The image, however, never became really alive and the nostalgic conclusion of the story is imprinted with respect for the autonomy of the work of art, for its absolute independence in face of every sort of reality: "Every day the image of the young woman grew more like a human being, and when they heard the story, people from far and near came in to look at it, and at the young cedar tree growing here, at which they were much astonished. The woman moved around very little and never was able to talk, but her husband dreamed what she wanted to tell him. It was through his dreams that he knew she was talking to him".

When one compares the clumsy legend of Pygmalion with this sensitive and modest tale, filled with an exquisite reserve and such moving poetry, is it not the Greeks who seem to play the barbarians and the poor savages of Alaska who may pretend to reach to the purer understanding of beauty?

Claude Levi-Strauss





## TWO ATHENIAN BLACK-FIGURED VASES

I WISH here to introduce two large Greek water jars, which have remained unknown too long during their years in the little visited Massarenti Collection in Rome and more recently in the Walters Collection in Baltimore. They are decorated in the black-figured technique with which Athens won a reputation and a world market for her pottery during the VI century B.C. Both are of good craftsmanship and of especially interesting subject matter, one mythological, the other emanating from the exciting life of the age.

The first of these vases<sup>1</sup> is concerned with the adventures of the hero Herakles who twice went down to the world of the dead while still alive. It is 19 inches tall, an amphora of a shape in vogue in the middle of the VI century: a foot like a shell fish, the echinus, above which is an egg-shaped body diminishing gradually into a short neck and a projecting lip with diagonal profile. From shoulders to neck run two small handles, round in cross section. A black glaze of something less than the best quality covers the body completely except for a band just above the foot and a rectangular panel on each side. The band

near the foot is decorated by rays painted in the black glaze on the red ground and the panels are filled with figures. The amphora has been broken and repaired and lacks two small pieces, unfortunately on the main figure, Herakles: a triangular piece in the upper part of his body and another triangular piece cutting across his left leg; these have been filled in and painted black to match the glaze. Some flaking of the glaze on the lower part is the only other serious damage.

The chief scene is composed of two women, the messenger god Hermes, a bearded hero of husky build, and a dog with two heads and a snake as his tail beneath an upper border, a conventionalized lotus and palmette chain (fig. 1). At the extreme left stands a woman, her flesh white, wearing Doric dress of black with overfolds and panels of red. Her black hair falls in a mass down her back; her head is bound by a red band. Striding before her and quite unconscious of her is the hero, nude except for a cloak thrown over his left shoulder, his left foot in advance, his elbows bent and his hands in front of his chest (the vase is damaged here). There is a line just before his right hand which may be the edge of a sword. Curling in front of his body is a snake which is the tail of the two-headed dog, one of whose heads looks back at the hero; the other is thrust forward, partly concealing a god wearing a pointed cap, winged shoes, a white tunic and a black

1. Walters Art Gallery no. 48.16. Purchased, 1902, from the Massarenti Collection, Rome. E. VAN ESBROECK AND OTHERS, *Catalogue du Musée de Peinture, Sculpture, et Archéologie au Palais Accoramboni*, Rome, 1897, II, p. 38, no. 189. Formerly much repainted. Some of the white still remaining may be repainted. The vase is retouched over all the cracks as well as in the areas named.

and red cloak. The god stands with his elbows bent and his hands before his body, and turns his head completely around to watch the scene behind him. Partly concealed by the body of the dog is a woman dressed like the first woman and in the same pose as the god. The dog has white triangular splashes on his back and red necks.

We have no difficulty in identifying this scene. It is Herakles in the world of the dead to bring up Kerberos, watch dog of the entrance. The heavy hero is unmistakable. The god with the winged shoes must be Hermes who as traveler and messenger is a suitable guide on this adventure. Kerberos we know from mythology as having three heads, but here he has, or shows, only two, as commonly in vase illustrations. Herakles clearly is pursuing Kerberos, preparatory to chaining him and leading him forth.

The picture on the other side of the vase is rather more difficult to interpret (fig. 2). A warrior wearing a cuirass, a helmet and a sheath has drawn his sword and seized a woman who wears the simple Doris dress, red but with black edges, and a voluminous mantel, black with white dots, which she has thrown over her head and sustains by her right hand. As witnesses of the seizure are two men at the sides of the picture, one muffled, hands and all, in a red and black mantel, and the other wearing a helmet and a short cloak, black and red with white dots in the lowest part, holding his arms akimbo as does Hermes and turning his head back over his shoulder.

There was no rule that the two scenes on a Greek vase be related in subject matter. But it is significant that on another vase the Kerberos incident is combined with a picture very like this, a woman standing between two warriors<sup>2</sup>. This suggests that there was a reason for the combination and that it would be well to suspect related subjects. Now Herakles went to the land of Hades and returned alive not once but twice. Once it was to seize Kerberos, a dare-devil stunt forced upon him by wicked Eurystheus, but the other time it was for the nobler purpose of righting a tragic mistake. For Alkestis, a true and good wife, had offered to give up her earthly life so that her husband Admetos might live, and he had accepted this sacrifice. Only after

she had gone did he appreciate his mistake and feel his loss. Herakles went and fought with Death and brought back Alkestis, alive but mute. The story was beautifully dramatized in Euripedes' play "Alkestis" a century after this vase was made. It would take little imagination to see on our vase an illustration of this story: Alkestis being seized by Herakles whose sword is still drawn from his battle, in the presence of the young Iolaos, Herakles' constant companion in adventure, to be taken back to her sorrowing husband who stands at the side wrapped in his cloak. The identification is not certain, for the hero is not characterized, and, indeed, to wear armor is the reverse of a characterization of Herakles. And there were plenty of Greek stories of women seized more or less violently<sup>3</sup>, and many scenes like this combined with others on Greek vases. Yet the combination with the other picture in two cases at least suggests that the scenes illustrate the Alkestis story.

The Kerberos incident is common on Greek vases, but usually is in rather different form<sup>4</sup>. Sometimes the locale is indicated by one or more of the columns of Hades' house. Sometimes Herakles has Kerberos on a chain and is dragging him forcibly away. And sometimes he approaches the taskmaster Eurystheus who has jumped into a jar. There is only one other vase with the scene in the same form as ours; and it is not only like it — it is very like it. This is a fragmentary amphora found at the old Etruscan city at Orvieto and now in the museum there<sup>5</sup>. There is the hero, now wearing the skin of the Nemean lion and again with his arms akimbo, following a Kerberos who has triangular spots on his back, alternately white and in incised outline. Hermes and the two women are present once more and there are additional spectators, an extra woman and an extra man who are partially concealed by the dog, and a man and a woman at the sides of the picture.

The vase in Orvieto has been attributed to Exekias, a famous artist of the early black-figured

3. Suggested are Aithra, Helen and Briseis; GERHARD, *op. cit.*, II, p. 155 (text to pl. 129). See also: BEAZLEY, "J.H.S.", XLVII, 1927, p. 78, and *loc. cit.*

4. Lists by GERHARD, *op. cit.*, II, p. 157; F. J. SCHNEIDER, *Zwölf Kämpfe des Herakles*, p. 45; P. HARTWIG, "Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts", VIII (1893), pp. 157 ff; H. B. WALTERS, "Journal of Hellenic Studies", XVIII (1898), pp. 296 ff.

5. W. TECHNAU, *Exekias* (BEAZLEY AND JACOBSTHAL, *Bilder griechischer Vasen*, IX), 1936, pp. 11 f, 20 f, pls. 11-13.

2. EDINBURGH, F. GERHARD, *Auserlesene griechische Vasenbilder*, 1840-1858, pl. 129; J. D. BEAZLEY, "Annual of the British School at Athens", XXXII (1931-2), p. 9, pl. IV.

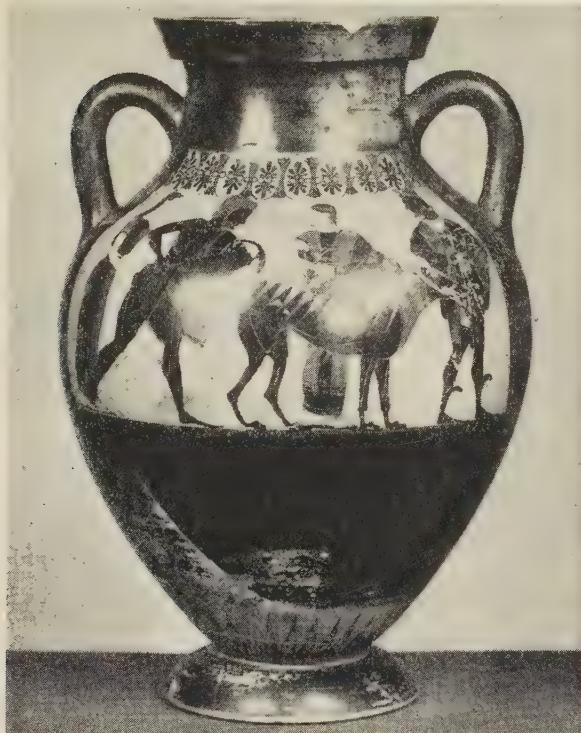


FIG. 1. — ATHENIAN BLACK-FIGURED AMPHORA. — Herakles catching Kerberos. — Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, Md.

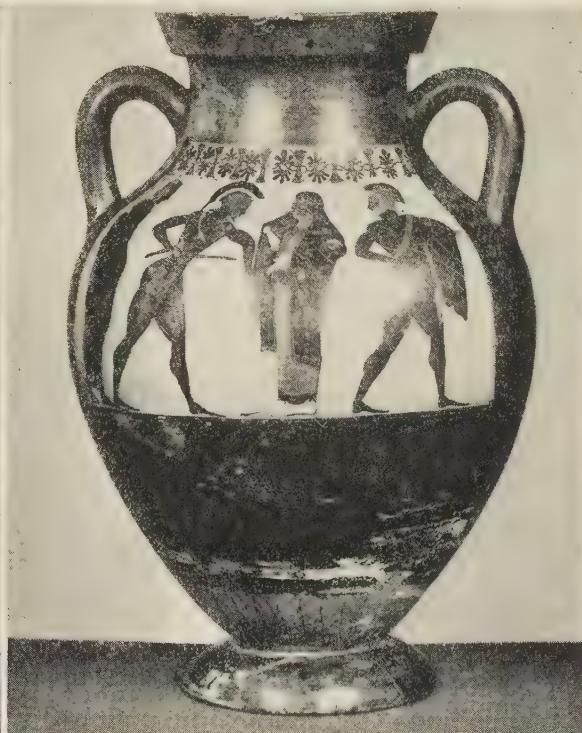


FIG. 2. — ATHENIAN BLACK-FIGURED AMPHORA. — Herakles seizing Alkestis? — Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, Md.

school, and our vase, too, has many characteristics in common with those by Exekias. The shape was used three times by the master<sup>6</sup>. Among the stylistic details which it shares with his paintings are: the relatively large heads; the akimbo position of the arms; the clenched fist drawn from the back with no fingers showing; the outstretched female hand painted without division between the fingers so that it looks like a white mitten; the red bands around the women's heads; and the restriction of the triple dot ornament to the lowest stripe in the cloak (in two instances on our vase). Some Exekian characteristics it does not have, notably the elaborate decoration of clothing which above all things is memorable from the signed vases of Exekias, and the ear with prominent lobe, notched at the front. As regards the ear it is fair to remember that Hermes on the Orvieto vase does not have the typical Exekian ear, but one somewhat, not quite, like our Herakles.

The Orvieto vase is one of Exekias' later works. Our vase is earlier. This is indicated by the shape

of the vase and by the simplicity of the composition and of the drawing. The Orvieto Kerberos scene has eight human beings, ours four; and the four overlap very little, while the eight cross their sixteen legs in such a way as to create the illusion of depth in the picture. Anatomical details are fewer on ours. These comparisons lead to the conclusion that the Walters vase is of slightly earlier date, not later than 540 B.C.

The same position as regards Exekias is held by forty-five vases tabulated by Beazley who calls them Group E<sup>7</sup>. They may be by the master's hand, but are earlier than any of his signed works. They share with his work many tricks in the rendering of details, including those which we have found on our vase. This vase may be with safety added to this group of early works not certainly by his hand; and because of its close resemblance to a certain Exekias vase it links all of Group E a little more firmly with that artist.

7. BEAZLEY, "Annual of the British School at Athens", XXXII (1931-2), pp. 3-8. Mr. D. A. Amyx pointed to the connection with Group E.



FIG. 3.—ATHENIAN BLACK-FIGURED AMPHORA.—(Restored).—Pyrrhic dance.—Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, Md.

The other vase is an amphora of the same form basically, but some refinements of shape mark it as made later<sup>8</sup>. The body is taller, its greatest width is farther above the middle, and the neck is longer. This time the handles are not round in section but are straps, with edges turned back, and each edge is decorated with an ivy chain painted on the reserved red. At the base of each handle is a black palmette in a reserved space. The main decoration is as before in two reserved panels with palmette chains above.

The more interesting of the two scenes comprises six figures all facing to the left: three warriors kneeling behind round shields and three archers standing erect and wearing long-sleeved tunics

8. Walters Art Gallery no. 48.10. Ht. 22½". Purchased, 1902, from the Massarenti Collection. VAN ES-BROECK, *op. cit.*, II, p. 48, no. 217. Formerly repainted. Now retouched over cracks and restored in portions as indicated by fig. 4. Some of the white in fig. 5 is modern.

and pointed caps (fig. 3). Unfortunately this side of the vase has been extensively restored, most of the part at the right being of modern fabric and modern glaze. Reproduced here (fig. 4) is the picture field with the modern parts cut from the photograph. Enough remains to show that the restoration is essentially correct. A large fragment includes most of three figures, two kneeling and one erect, with a foot of another appearing between the feet of the second kneeling man; at the right edge are the remains of two feet, one in front of the other, bringing the total of feet to nine; two fragments from the upper rim of the picture, one of them from the upper right corner, include the pointed caps of two standing figures, but the relative positions of the eighth and ninth feet are the same as the fourth and fifth, proving that the fifth person in line was kneeling. The total, then, is six people, three kneeling and three standing. Enough of the second figure, an archer, remains to prove that he really held his right arm above his head; he might swing a club, as the restorer thought, or he might have a bow, though the outstretched left hand holds one bow, partly concealed by the crest of the kneeling warrior. A few more details need to be mentioned: the double crest of this warrior, an artistic convention of the period; the fact that each of the kneeling warriors holds two spears, one in each hand; the costume of the archer, tunic decorated by incised stars, white dots and a red cross; the lack of trousers which often accompany such a tunic; and the shield devices, an animal that looks like a weasel painted in white on the



FIG. 4.—Scene from fig. 3, without restored portions.

first black shield, and three connected human legs revolving about the center of the second, painted in good black glaze on a background of bad black glaze, originally covered with white paint surrounding the legs.

A similar scene decorates a black-figured oinochoe in Lublin, Poland<sup>9</sup>. This scene is complete and has four participants, all facing toward the left, two kneeling behind the shields, each holding two spears pointed upward and back, and each partially concealing a standing man who wears a pointed cap and quiver; of the standing men the first swings two bows, one forward and one back, the second swings his empty right hand forward with the palm out and conceals his left.

A third scene, so like the vase in Poland that you might mistake one for the other, is on an amphora once in the possession of the archaeologist Gerhard and illustrated by him, now in the Berlin Museum<sup>10</sup>. Everything is as on the Lublin vase, including the gesture of the second archer. On the reverse of the amphora is a scene which may be our guide to the understanding of all three warrior scenes. It is the battle of the gods against the giants (or Titans), Athena and a bearded figure, not a god but the hero Herakles, spearing their fallen enemies. We know from ancient lore that it was in honor of Athena's part in this battle and her subsequent victory dance that Pyrrhic dances in mass formation were celebrated at both the great and the small Panathenaic festivals<sup>11</sup>. And here, on the reverse of the amphora which shows the divine battle, the human Pyrrhic is actually in progress. As we said before, one must not assume a relationship in subject between two sides of a vase; but one need not refuse to recognize correspondence such as this.

Military dances were praised by Plato as educationally valuable, since they imitate actual battle movements, offensive and defensive<sup>12</sup>. On the one

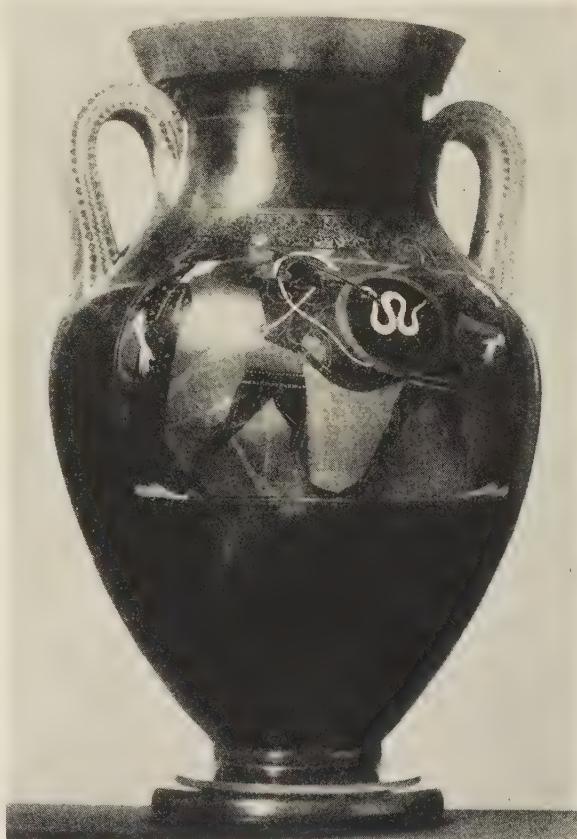


FIG. 5.—ATHENIAN BLACK-FIGURED AMPHORA.—Battle.—Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, Md.

hand, he says, the dancer pretends to parry blows by springing away or rising up and down, while on the other he imitates archery and the hurling of missiles. Xenophon gives a description of military dances conducted by Greeks on the march for the entertainment of the Paphlagonians. Of these dances some were performed by groups, some by individuals. Xenophon includes dances which imitate other than purely military encounters, such as the tussle between a farmer and a robber, and ends the exhibition with a solo dance known as the *Persian* in which there was much falling on the knees<sup>13</sup>; he does not consider this imitation of defensive action for he is not an educational theorist like Plato.

One or two warriors dancing to the music of the flute is a common subject for artistic representation

9. E. BULANDA, Eos, "Commentarii societatis philologae Polonorum", XXXI (1928), pp. 297-303, pl. I; C.V.A., Collection Sekulowicz, Poland, (fasc. 3), pl. 128, no. 13.

10. GERHARD, *op. cit.*, pl. LXIII; K. A. NEUGEBAUER, *Führer durch das Antiquarium, II, Vasen* (1932), p. 46, no. F.1865. The male combatant on the reverse is called Dionysos by both Gerhard and Neugebauer, but in Gerhard's drawing he wears the lion skin of Herakles.

11. Dionysios of Halikarnassos, VII, 72; A. MOMMSEN, *Feste der Stadt Athen*, p. 98.

12. PLATO, *Laws*, VII, 815.

13. XENOPHON, *Anabasis*, VI, I, 10. On this passage see: F. WEEGE, *Der Tanz in der Antike*, Halle, 1926, pp. 36 ff.

throughout Greek history. Representations of mass dances, however, are rare. On a very early vase, one of Proto-Corinthian fabric, there is a scene of four rows of many soldiers stepping in time to the music of a flautist<sup>14</sup>. This certainly is a dance, and we may think of the scene, despite the Corinthian origin of the vase, as typical of those which took place at Sparta during the VII century B.C. when Tyrtaios was writing his martial songs. From Athens we have had no representation of a Pyrrhic dance *en masse* from early times, though we know that they were part of the Panathenaic festival in the days of the Peisistratids. A IV century marble relief found at the entrance to the Athenian acropolis shows eight nude men carrying shields and moving in formation followed by their sponsor, the choregos; at the top is an inscription recording the winning of the prize by this choregos<sup>15</sup>. Later inscriptions record similar victories.

Representations of the mass Pyrrhic as it was performed at Athens in the VI century can now be recognized in the three vase paintings which I have described, each comprising two or three pairs of spearmen and archers, armed to the teeth but not in action and making movements which are not truly martial. We may note as impossible battle procedure the fact that the spearmen are kneeling, as they would not be for throwing spears; that some of the spears point in odd directions; that some archers have no bows and some have two. Besides, there is no enemy apparent in any of the scenes. On the other hand the regularity of the spacing of the men and the consistency of the poses indicate that these are not haphazard groupings of warriors. The numbers are what we would expect a Greek to choose when he wanted to represent masses: not great numbers, but rows of two, to prove that there are regular ranks. The poses are angular as they should be in such a dance. The kneeling which occurs in all the scenes and which is unintelligible as a military maneuver is mentioned by both Xenophon and Plato as a dance step. The swinging of two bows is

certainly a plausible dance movement, though it hardly conforms to the theory of Plato.

The archers' costume needs explanation. The embroidered tunic, the pointed cap, and usually the long trousers make an ensemble which certainly is not Greek. It used to be considered Scythian, but Bulanda showed in connection with the vase in Lublin that it belonged also to the Thracians who were allies of the Athenians during the age of Peisistratos when the vase was made<sup>16</sup>. And long ago it was pointed out by Minns that figures in this costume on all later vases and on some early ones must be Greeks<sup>17</sup>. And so indeed they must be in the scenes in which they occur so frequently: battle scenes in which they fight on the side of the Greeks, even in the Trojan wars; arming scenes; and the multitude of pictures of the Greek warrior leaving home in a chariot. Perhaps we dare go farther than Bulanda and suggest that these archers are not just Greek allies of the Athenians, but Athenians who adopted as their uniform a dress from the same race of men from whom they adopted their weapons, the bow and arrow.

The second scene on the Walters amphora is complete, though crossed by numerous cracks (fig. 5). Two warriors in mortal combat fill the greater part of the panel, while at each end a woman looks on. One warrior strides to our right and shows us his front and the interior of his shield which is cut out at the side; he wears greaves, a red tunic with lower border of white dots and incised hooks, and a helmet with low crest. His opponent shows us his back and turns his round shield with white snake device toward us, and wears no cuirass but a black tunic with borders like his opponent, greaves, and a helmet with high crest. Each swings his spear aloft and carries a sword in sheath slung about his body.

The women's garments are the same as on the Herakles vase. Attempts to make the Doric peplos look softer and more natural are the curved lines at the bottom and at the waist, the swallow tails at all the corners, and the diagonal ends of the arm coverings. The upper parts of the garments are divided by lines diverging from the throat, and the skirt by vertical lines, incised or painted in red. On one skirt are cross lines which suggest the ends of a mantel. Embroideries are simulated by groups of

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37, fig. 43; *Antike Denkmäler*, II, pl. 44; "Notizie degli Scavi" (1882), pp. 291 ff; *Ausonia*, 1913, pls. 5-8; JOHANSEN, *Les vases sicyoniens*, pl. 39; PFUHL, *Malerei und Zeichnung der Griechen*, fig. 59; C.V.A., Villa Giulia, III C e, pls. 1-4; MERLIN, *Vases grecs*, pl. 12; PAYNE, *Necrocorinthia*, p. 272, no. 39.

<sup>15</sup> WEEGE, *op. cit.*, p. 49, fig. 62; DAREMBERG AND SAGLIO, *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines*, fig. 5501; I.G., II., no. 1286.

<sup>16</sup> Eos, XXXI, 1928, pp. 209 ff.

<sup>17</sup> E. H. MINNS, *Scythians and Greeks*, Cambridge, 1913, pp. 53 ff.



FIG. 6. — DETAIL FROM PROTO-CORINTHIAN VASE. — Pyrrhic Dance. — Villa Giulia, Rome. — (After Weege.)

three white painted dots, incised stars and red painted crosses scattered at random, while there are incised hooks at the bottom and bands of white dots at the neck lines.

Success in interpreting the two sides of some vases with related subjects tempts one to try to read some special meaning into this battle on the reverse of the Pyrrhic dance scene. Is it shorthand for a battle waged by great numbers? Is it one of the famous battles from the Iliad, or the duel at the funeral games for Patroklos? And if this last is true, should the Pyrrhic dance on the other side be transferred from the festival of the day into the remote past, to be another event at those famous games? These questions are unanswerable, and we had best accept the scene as just another battle.

The comparative freedom in the drawing of the women's garments is an indication that the vase was

made in a later period than the Herakles vase. The type of drawing places it within the period of an anonymous black-figure artist who is called the Antimenes Painter after an inscription of the name Antimenes on a certain vase<sup>18</sup>. There are, however, not enough distinctive stylistic characteristics on this vase to connect it with his hand. It belongs to the group of black-figured vases which were made when the red-figured technique was in its experimental stage, about 530 B.C., that is, ten years later than the Herakles vase. The value of this vase consists not of its artistic quality, though that is not to be despised, but of its unusual subject, the Pyrrhic dance in mass formation.

DOROTHY KENT HILL.

<sup>18</sup> BEAZLEY, "J.H.S.", XLVII, 1927, pp. 63-94; *Attic Black-Figure, a Sketch* (1928), pp. 41 f.

## B I B L I O G R A P H Y

CHARLES DE TOLNAY.—*The Youth of Michelangelo.*—Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1943, 295 pp. 292 pls. 12 x 9.

*The Youth of Michelangelo* by Charles de Tolnay is one of the most impressive publications which has come out from the Princeton University Press. Well printed upon excellent paper, with a particularly lavish number of excellent reproductions, it adds very materially to the works on Michelangelo. The very fact that the author has kept his subject within the restricted bounds set, enables him to give completeness within those bounds; the close of Michelangelo's Florentine period with which he has chosen to end is obviously the logical break in the artist's career. What is to be hoped is that this study presages the publication soon of another volume or volumes on the Roman years.

The author has very cleverly broadened the appeal of and the public for his book by his method of presentation, dividing his book into three main sections: Life, Artistic Development, Critical Catalogue. By isolating the narrative parts from the critical comment he has thereby given it more interest for the casual reader which the copious illustrations will also attract, without detracting from its usefulness to student or scholar. The two first sections are complete in themselves, but are designed to supplement each other. While the Critical Catalogue is isolated it nevertheless recapitulates the ideas expressed in the first two sections, gives, exhaustively annotated, all the critical material needed in the most scholarly of books but does not stop the flow of narrative.

One of the most satisfactory portions of the volume is the second section on the "Artistic Development" of the artist. De Tolnay makes very clear the direction which it inevitably takes, analyzes well the germinal bud which carried in it the seed of all his future development. "He seems throughout his life to have been haunted by a single vision. Each of his creations, of the same unique quality, carries with it the message of an unknown and superior world". His spirit always dwelt as Henri Focillon would have said on one of the summits of the *ligne des hauteurs* which mark the great creative moments of the world. With Dante, Giotto, Giovanni Pisano, Jacopo della Quercia, Masaccio, Donatello, "all true ancestors", he passed on to the future the torch of Italian genius. In a century when it would have been easy to conform to the trends of "lyric romanticism, bourgeois naturalism and scientific realism . . . he no longer considered the work of art as an imitation of visible reality, nor as the image of a dream world, nor as a means of arriving at knowledge of the universe, but as an embodiment of the very essence of human life and destiny. In this vision of the cosmic

law of life in man, he relates himself to the wisdom of ancient Italy".

De Tolnay shows how the earliest drawings are copies after Giotto and Masaccio, but are drawings imbued with a peculiarly personal quality "through sheer weight and plastic volume" by the genius of the master. He shows how the earliest sculptured works, the *Virgin of the Stairs* and the *Battle of the Centaurs and the Lapiths*, each an antithesis to the other in its subject material, relate to the past and the future. He outlines how the Bolognese period, low in accomplishment, nevertheless brings him under the influence of Jacopo della Quercia, always a master of emotion. In Rome he awakens "to render outer forms more sharply and precisely". How finally in the early maturity of his Florentine period he was "to gain complete control in representing the inner plastic structure of the human body. He holds to exactitude and richness of detail but now seeks to subordinate the secondary to the essential. His art takes on a new severity and economy of plastic expression". I quote because in the economy and succinctness of De Tolnay's prose one can measure the real quality of his critical ability.

The Critical Catalogue referred to above is divided into four sections: Catalogue of Original Sculptures and Paintings, Catalogue of Drawings, Catalogue of Lost Works, Catalogue of Apocryphal and Falsely attributed Works. It is admirable in its completeness. The author has chosen as his form the excellent scheme used by Edouard Michel and Mademoiselle Hélène de Vallée, to whom he gives suitable acknowledgement for their *Inventaire critique et détaillé du Département de Peintures du Musée du Louvre*. Only occasionally in the Catalogue of Drawings does one wish that the author might be less categorical in his dismissal of dates "proposed by Berenson" and other authors.

The author is at pains always to develop the essentially sculptural qualities of Michelangelo's genius whether it was to express itself in quick sketch, in a painted panel, or in actual sculpture. The reproductions are admirably chosen to emphasize this three dimensional quality, moving in sequence around an individual piece of sculpture, perhaps highlighting a detail, until the object illustrated assumes an amplitude, seems actually to achieve form in space with each succeeding plate. Few books have the benefit of such unlimited illustration. The reproductions for the *Doni Madonna* give the same fullness of viewpoint for one of the painted panels.

The fact, also, that many of the pieces are later reproduced in smaller format for comparison on the same page with the associated pieces is excellent, and is of immediate use in visually relating Michelangelo to the past and in showing vividly how he broke with

the Florentine Quattrocento tradition. Derivation of ideas from Jacopo della Quercia, from Donatello, his transformation of them to form the cinquecento tradition is made graphically clear.

Finally the Appendices, with much unpublished correspondence written to Michelangelo, are a real contribution giving a contemporary viewpoint which at times is extremely valuable and revealing.

All in all the book is an admirable example of contemporary scholarship in America, is a must for all who wish to study this period exhaustively and yet is so attractively written and arranged that it can appeal to a far wider public than that of the scholar.

WILLIAM M. MILLIKEN

*Seventy-third Annual Report of the Trustees, 1942.*—New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1943, 9 x 7.

Lack of space prevented us from reviewing before the report of the Trustees of the Metropolitan Museum of Art for the year 1942 issued several months ago. According to the Museum's constitution, it is presented by the Board of Trustees to the Fellows of the Corporation. The 1942 report begins with, under the title *Under the Shadow of War* an enumeration of the members of the staff who have been granted leave of absence to enter the Armed Forces or active Governmental service. In the same section we learn that Francis Henry Taylor, Director of the Museum, was dispatched at the request of the State Department and associated agencies to Latin-America in the summer of 1942. In this trip, the aim of which was "to discover first-hand ways and means in which the Museum and other American institutions could encourage a larger understanding of mutual problems with our neighbors to the South," Mr. Taylor visited a dozen countries on both sides of Latin America and "the success of his trip was unqualified, and will, as the months pass, bear sound fruit."

The report also states about "the safekeeping of the collections in the Museums' depositories where the best and most precious works of the Museum have been placed to be kept safe for the duration."

Tribute is paid to the memory of Richard Townley Haines Halsey, a member of the Board of the Museum since 1914 and "one of the Museum's most beloved and faithful trustees," dead this year.

In the report of the "activities related to the war" is emphasized an opinion which we more than share about the fact that the activities connected with museum work do not need in time of war to go into hiding. "Those who remain behind are by no means oblivious to their obligations to aid in the war effort." To such changes in our way of living as are provided by the incubus of increasing taxes, the rationing and all sorts of cares and worries brought by the presence of the war, a museum can bring a most valuable compensation by giving to the people and especially to the servicemen a most advisable enjoyment. To bring that enjoyment even to those who are deprived of the privilege of visiting the museums' collections, the Metropolitan Museum has made many loans to Army camps and Naval stations, an initiative of that Museum among many others to be greatly praised.

The eclectic promotion of the activities of the Museum can be appreciated through the report of special exhibitions of the last year which include such an exhibition as the one of *Renaissance in Fashion 1942*, which "was embarked upon to give a stimulus to the best American dress designers at the moment when, bereft of Paris inspiration," they would "require the support of an institution with long established interest in this field." Another exhibition was the one of *Artists for Victory*, which was held in as many as 28 galleries and presented the view of the best contemporary works of painting, sculpture and the graphic arts selected from some 15,000 submissions from all over the United States.

Among the gifts and loans to the Museum we have to point out the great gift by Samuel H. Kress of Velazquez's *Portrait of Cardinal Gaspar de Borja y Velasco*; Mrs. John D. Rockefeller's donation of 37 Far Eastern sculptures and 5 paintings; Mrs. Horace Havemeyer's loan of pottery vessels of Mesopotamia and Persia; Mrs. Herbert N. Straus' gift of a XVIII century boiserie from the Hotel de Tesse in Paris, and Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney's children's gift of a paneling of the XVI century from the chateau de la Bastie d'Urfé, etc. Among the anonymous donors' gifts we are pleased to find a life-size figure of St. Francis in Jacaranda wood by Maria Martins, noted Brazilian sculptor and wife of the Brazilian Ambassador, and the terracotta by Jacques Lipchitz.

We cannot close this all too short and very summarized report of our 1942 debt toward the Metropolitan Museum of Art without mentioning the most interesting item among those added to the Department of Renaissance and Modern Art collections. Such are the two unique XVI century French tapestries woven at Fontainebleau and representing scenes from the story of Diana, executed originally for the Chateau d'Anet, that is to say, for Diane de Poitiers. These were also presented by the children of Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney. Other tapestries of great value were acquired from the Whitney sale. Among the sculptures, those received as a bequest from Carolin L. Morgan are outstanding: a *Madonna and Child* (marble), by Mino da Fiesole, and a *Bacchante* (terracotta) by A. Pajou; to the Department of Egyptian art the generosity of Mr. Albert Gallatin brought fourteen Predynastic pottery vessels, an ostracon, three shawabtis, a marble cat, a steatite head of Bes, and the pottery head of a woman, quoted as being "all useful additions in their respective categories."

It is impossible to tell more about the Museum's activities, although it is still to be noted that the Museum was selected to administer the great national artistic asset represented by the "Index of American Design, a vast corpus of over 20,000 original plates, drawings, and photographs prepared under Federal auspices as a full documentary survey of basic American arts and crafts from all over the country. The present usefulness and the latent possibilities of this body of material cannot be overaccented. Steps are going forward not only to house the Index adequately but to make it more widely available through publication and through circulating exhibitions."

ASSIA R. VISSON.

## REVIEW OF REVIEWS

ARS ISLAMICA, (Vol. IX, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1942, 240 p.).—The periodical publication of the Research Seminary in Islamic Art of the Institute of Fine Arts of the University of Michigan has grown into an impressively thick volume in its recently distributed 1942 issue. One can hardly emphasize sufficiently the wealth of material gathered and most thoroughly presented by its excellent editor: RICHARD ETTINGHAUSEN, a contributor—we are pleased to point out—to one of the very next issues of the "Gazette des Beaux-Arts". Besides his editorial work upon this volume, Mr. Ettinghausen has contributed to it with a substantial review and criticism of Talbot Hamlin's book on *Architecture through the Ages* (student edition at G. B. Putnam's Sons, 1940), with two short memorial studies of personalities recently lost to the scholarly world: Ernst Cohn-Wiener (1882-1941) and John Ellerton Lodge (1878-1942), and with an article: *Painting in the Fatimid Period, a Reconstruction*. This latter is a richly documented and brilliantly conducted study which reveals a new section of the history of painting in the fascinating period which was the crossroad of the Oriental, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine influences and the various new local art expressions germinating at that time in the countries of the East. Mr. Ettinghausen shows that "basically the first Fatimid style, as found in Palermo" (at the Capella Palatina, XII century) "is, like the Perso-Iraqian one in Samarra,—a manifestation of East Hellenistic art strongly reflecting Sassanian ideas" and that both Samarra and Palermo styles are "derivatives of Sassanian painting". By extending his study to objects of daily use, such as pottery and textiles, he succeeds in crystallizing several styles of painting characteristic of Fatimid Egypt, with a predominance, however, of the style of Iran "as it is known to us from Samarra".—We also owe to Mr. Ettinghausen the publication in the same issue of *The Writings of Ananda K. Coomaraswamy* "as a tribute for his sixty-fifth birthday", with a long bibliography (even though it presents only the principal of this great scholar's writings) compiled by Miss Helen E. Ladd.—Another contributor of the "Gazette" whose next article will shortly appear on our pages—DR. WOLFGANG BORN—presents in the same volume a study of *Ivory Powder Flasks from the Mughal Period*, which is particularly valuable since, as the author points out, ivory horns have never been treated as a distinct group of works of art nor has the history of Indian ivory as a whole been written until now. The conclusion to this most comprehensive study of a chapter of the history of ivory is worth being quoted in its entirety: "Fish-shaped ivory priming flasks decorated with animal carvings were made in the Mughal period in India from the end of the XVI century until the end of the XVIII century. They include two strata of Indian art fused together.

The first stratum is represented by strongly conventionalized zoomorphic motifs which go back to the "animal style" of the steppes and to Hindu iconography. The second stratum is represented by more naturalistic hunting scenes, taken from contemporary Mughal miniatures. The archaic animal decoration gave the character of a charm to the priming flasks".—D. FIELD AND E. PROSTOV, who published in the current year of the "Gazette" the results of excavations made in Crimea, continue their long series of publications in this field which are scattered in specialized periodicals all over the world, by giving, in the section of Notes, a widely documented and critical account of *Excavations in Uzbekistan, 1937-1939* conducted by a local committee in conjunction with several scholarly institutions of Soviet Russia.—The 1941 exhibition of the Brooklyn Museum which "represented the first attempt at a comprehensive showing of Coptic art in the United States" is recorded in the same section by DONALD N. WILBER, who brings out all its values.—A contribution to the same field is given by GEORGE H. MYERS' note on *The Dating of Coptic Textiles in the Light of Excavations at Dura-Europos* with other sections of which the "Gazette"'s readers are well acquainted.—*Two Rock-Crystal Carvings of the Fatimid Period* published by A. H. CHRISTIE bring additional material to the scope of Mr. Ettinghausen's above-mentioned study. It is to be noted, however, that due to the war the author could not conclude his investigations in Venice, where the Treasury of San Marco kept a long and very interesting series of Fatimid crystals with European mounts.—Longer and much more extensive studies are those two which open the volume: *Damascus, Studies in Architecture I*, by ERNST HERZFELD, and *Material for a History of Islamic Textiles up to the Mongol Conquest*, by R. B. SERJEANT. These bring to each of their subjects too vast a material to be even touched upon here. It is enough to say that the materials—monuments and inscriptions—presented and discussed by Mr. Herzfeld are those which "were surveyed and collected between 1908 and 1930 as part of the broader project sponsored by the Institute of France", that of van Berchen's *Materiaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum*, and that Mr. Serjeant publishes practically a history of Islamic textiles with a long introduction and three chapters on (1) The Origin of the Tiraz System, (2) The Tiraz under the Abbasids and the manufactures of Bagdad, and (3) The Manufactures of Iran and Jazira.—Before closing this most summarized review we would like also to point out the interest of the book reviews' section which counts more than 60 pages of this volume and in which the renewed discussion of the *Survey of Persian Art and its critics* testifies to the objective and eminently scholarly mind of "Ars Islamica".

ASSIA R. VISSON.

# NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

LINDSAY HUGHES has been for the last ten years associated with the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art and Atkins Museum of Fine Arts, Kansas City, Mo., as assistant (1935-42) and as acting curator (since 1942) in the Oriental Department. Graduated with an A.B. degree from the University of Missouri (1931), she has done special work at the Universities of Harvard, Princeton and Kansas City, and has been instructor in Chinese Art at the Summer School of the latter in 1943. She has written radio dramas and prepared marionette shows for the Nelson-Atkins collections, to which belong the majority of the textiles she discusses in her article on: *The Kuo Ch'in Wang Textiles* . . . . . page 129

GEORG SWARZENSKI, Fellow of Research at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Mass., was successively associated with the Royal Museums of Berlin (1901-06), Assistant Professor in the Berlin University and Director of the Staedelsches Kunstinstitut in Frankfurt a.M. (1906-37). In 1907 he founded the Municipal Modern Art Gallery and the Sculpture Museum of the same town, was Director of both, and since 1927, General Director of all the city museums there. He has published books on Medieval painting, a Monography on Niccolo Pisano, etc. He has worked extensively upon Medieval and Renaissance Art, sculpture, goldsmith work and manuscript illumination, the development of museums and the history of collecting. It is to these last endeavors of his that belongs his article on: *Some Aspects of Italian Renaissance Sculpture in the National Gallery* . . . . page 149

GEORGE BOAS is since 1921 with Johns Hopkins University (since 1933 as professor of the history of Philosophy). He has been chairman of the Curriculum in Fine Arts at that University and a member of the Executive Council of the American Society for Aesthetics; he is a Trustee of the Baltimore Museum of Art where he organized symposia on the history of taste (1938-1940), a subject on which he has lectured at the Metropolitan, the Frick Collection, the National Gallery, etc. He is the author of *Art, Time and Eternity* . . . . page 157

MANUEL TOUSSAINT received his university education in Mexico and has devoted himself to art research work there. In 1934 he founded at the University of Mexico an Art Laboratory, eventually transformed into the Instituto des Investigaciones Esteticas, of which he is the present Director. He was previously the chief of the Department of Fine Arts of the Secretariat of Public Education in Mexico, Director of the School of Fine Arts of the Academy of San Carlos, the oldest of America. His special field of study is Mexican art. During his recent trip to the United States, he discovered a series of paintings which he discusses in this issue: *Mexican Colonial Paintings in Davenport* . . . . . page 167

CLAUDE LEVI-STRAUSS, Professor, Ecole Libre des Hautes Etudes, New York, was successively: Professor at the University of Sao Paolo, Brazil (1935-38); charged with scientific missions by the Minister of National Education of France (1935-36), by the government of the State of Sao Paolo (1935-36), and by the National Center of Scientific Research of France (1937-40). He was a member of the Council of Direction of the Société des Américanistes of Paris (1939) and visiting professor at the New School for Social Research, New York (1942). In this issue he studies *The Art of the Northwest Coast at the American Museum of Natural History* . . . . . page 175

DOROTHY KENT HILL, who discusses in this issue *Two Athenian Black-Figured Vases* . . . . . page 183 is a former fellow of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, has been at the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore since 1934 and is Curator of Ancient Art at that institution. She has written on Classical sculpture, pottery and metalwork for the "American Journal of Archaeology", the "Journal of the Walters Art Gallery", the "Art Bulletin", and other journals, and has lectured for the Archaeological Institute of America.

BIBLIOGRAPHY in this issue . . . . . page 190 is by WILLIAM M. MILLIKEN, Director, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio, and by Mrs. ASSIA R. VISSON, Secretary to the Council of the "Gazette des Beaux-Arts".

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